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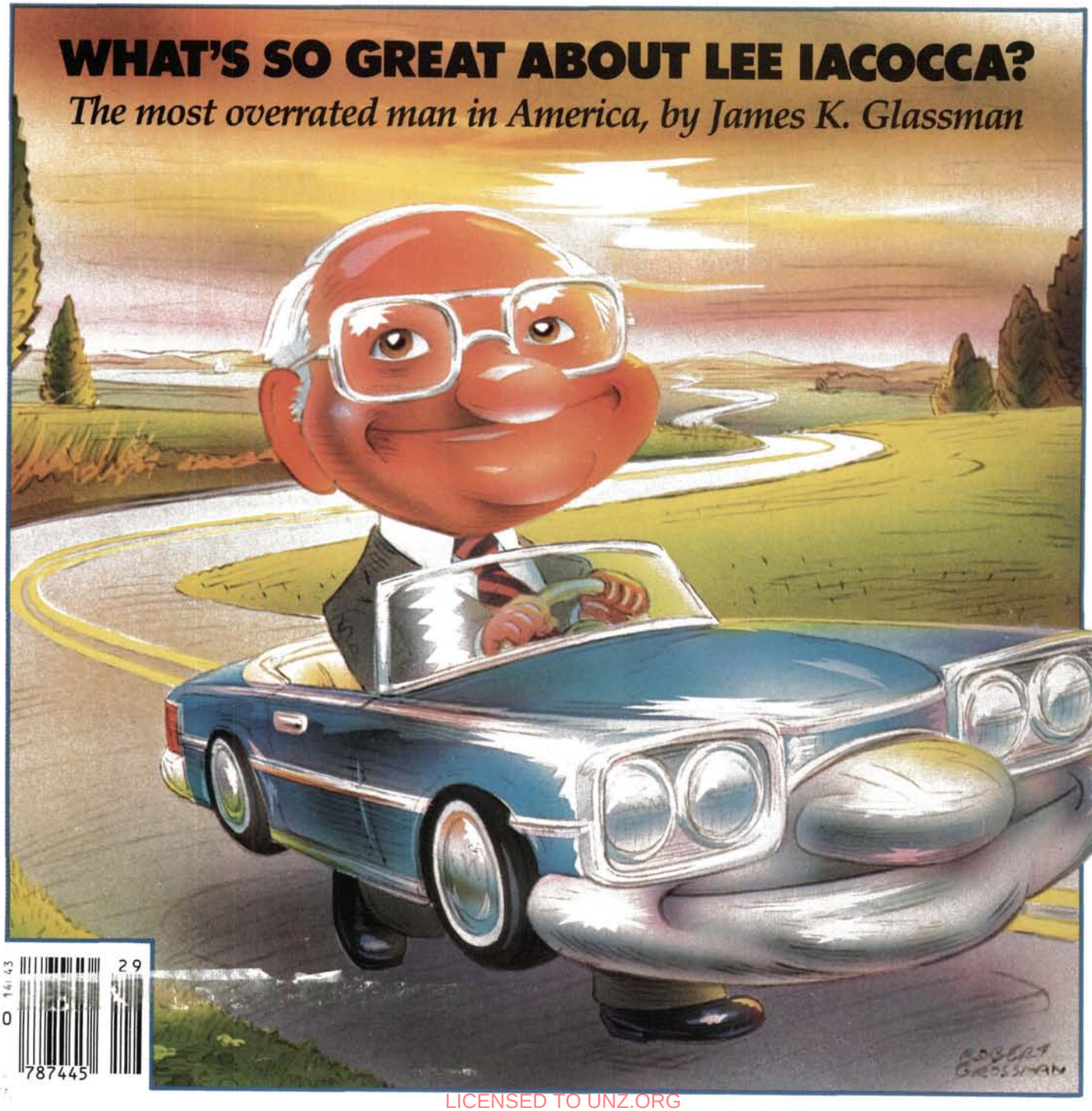

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CORRESPONDENCE

ARMED ANTI-COMMUNISTS

To the editors:

Charles Krauthammer complains in "Throwing It Away" (TNR, June 25) that the Democrats "are not ready for the challenge, political and intellectual, of supporting an armed anti-Communist (in the absence of direct Soviet intervention). . . . " This is unjust. Democratic Administrations did not hesitate to support armed anti-Communists in Brazil in 1964, Indonesia in 1965, the Dominican Republic in 1965, Greece in 1967, and Turkey in 1980, among other examples, each time in the absence of direct Soviet intervention. Nor did many Congressional Democrats raise serious, or even perfunctory, objections when Republican Administrations supported similar anti-Communist actions in Iran in 1953, Guatemala in 1954, El Salvador in 1972, and Chile in 1973, among others. It was a Democratic Administration, remember, that designed and first implemented the counterinsurgency strategy that proved so humane and effective in Latin America and Southeast Asia. And Democratic Administrations inaugurated or continued extensive programs to train and equip our anti-Communist allies to meet the threat of armed (and sometimes unarmed) Communist opposition.

I believe the record shows that, with few exceptions, Democrats have steadfastly eschewed the fastidiousness that annoys Mr. Krauthammer. Current departures from this standard are surely not the expression of any doctrinaire adherence to civilized norms of international behavior, but only hardheaded, pragmatic, and unimpeachably patriotic electoral opportunism.

GEORGE SCIALABBA
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Mr. Krauthammer replies:

Clever, but beside the point. My subject was the entirely new historical phenomenon of (objectively) anti-Communist guerrilla warfare. For example, what is happening today in Angola. Anti-Communist putsches, coups, and counterinsurgency are old hat and have posed no challenges, intellectual or other, in the past.

TESTY TEACHER

To the editors:

David Owen's "Testing, Testing" (TNR, June 4) is a scarcely veiled right-wing attack on much maligned and much put-upon public school teachers. Obviously Mr. Owen doesn't care for unions, nor does he care whether veteran teachers lose their jobs, raises, or promotions.

I was a big-city teacher, having spent over forty years in classrooms ranging from neighborhood ghettos to college-level advanced-placement classes, and many years supervising student teachers. I would consider being asked to take a "competency test" an insult, and so would many of my colleagues.

Yes, aspiring teachers should pass competency tests before receiving

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

JULY 16 & 23, 1984

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FROM WASHINGTON

AFFIRMATIVE CONFUSION

If the Memphis Fire Department took it upon itself to reserve half of its jobs for blacks, this would almost surely be illegal under the Supreme Court's famous *Bakke* decision, which forbids the use of racial quotas by government agencies. On the other hand, a court can—and indeed did—impose the very same quota as the result of a civil rights lawsuit. One oddity of civil rights law, as currently interpreted, is that it can forbid you and require you to do the exact same thing. This confusion reflects our deep national ambivalence about affirmative action, along with our national willingness to be bossed around by lawyers.

The Supreme Court added another odd twist in this year's big affirmative action decision, the *Stotts* case (concerning the Memphis Fire Department), handed down June 12. Courts may impose racial quotas in hiring, but they may not impose racial quotas in layoffs that interfere with a policy of "last-hired, first-fired." This distinction is odd for two reasons, relating to the two main concerns of affirmative action opponents.

First, there is the notion of "innocent victims." Is the blameless white man who gets laid off before his turn because of an affirmative action plan more to be pitied than the blameless white man who never gets hired in the first place? Hard to see. Second, there is the idea of "merit." What offends some people above all about affirmative action is that it departs from the supposed American tradition of rewarding people based on their own talents and efforts. Yet the Supreme Court has now held that while affirmative action may trample the sacred groves of merit hiring, the relatively mundane practice of layoffs by seniority is inviolable.

The apparent explanation is that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 specifically protects seniority systems. That is why supporters of affirmative action cling to the hope that the ramifications of *Stotts* will be limited to similar situations involving seniority. Opponents of affirmative action hope it will be interpreted more broadly. But these people, who read the Civil Rights Act as a great expression of the raw merit principle, pure and simple, ought to reflect on what it means that a departure from that principle is written right into the act.

Here is a hint. What it means is that other considerations besides merit have always been an integral part of both government policy and social ideals about who gets ahead. In an identical seniority-versus-affirmative-action case last year involving Boston policemen, which the Supreme Court deflected on a technicality, a footnote in one of the briefs revealed that the most important factor in deciding the order of layoffs was neither seniority nor merit. Rather, it was an official policy of favoring veterans. The victims of this policy are as innocent as the victims of affirmative action, but aiding veterans is considered a goal important enough to override that concern. Is integrating the police force any less important?

Unfortunately, the legal basis for affirmative action has always been shaky, and the *Stotts* case reads like a major thwack at that foundation. The Civil Rights Act forbids employers "to discriminate against any individual . . . because of such individual's race. . . . " Racial quotas do precisely that. The Act even says explicitly that it shouldn't "be interpreted to require . . . preferential treatment . . . because of race . . . " based on mere statistics. The legislative record of the Civil Rights Act debate contains desperate assurances by the bill's supporters, such as Hubert Humphrey, that reverse favoritism is not what they have in mind.

It is a testament to the American legal mind that the Civil Rights Act has become a fount of reverse discrimination even so. First, although the Act says that statistics alone can't be used to establish discrimination, courts have held that statistics may be used to demonstrate that an employer's hiring policy has a "disproportionate impact" on minorities. The burden then shifts to the company or government agency to

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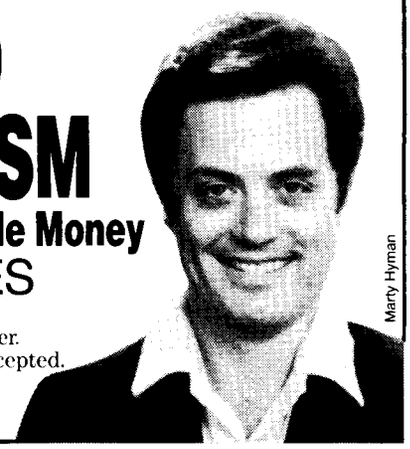

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
JULY 16 & 23, 1984

THE RUNNING MATE

The Vice Presidency is the slapstick joke of the American system. From the start it has been treated as a kind of constitutional rubber chicken. When the Constitution was still in the drafting stage, Benjamin Franklin said he thought the whole idea of a Vice President was ridiculous. "If they insist on having one," he added, "I shall address him as 'Your Superfluous Excellency.' " Woodrow Wilson wrote of the office that "the chief embarrassment in describing it is that in saying how little there is to be said about it one has evidently said all that there is to say." And President Wilson's own V.P., Thomas Riley Marshall, likened his job to being "a man in a cataleptic state: he cannot speak; he cannot move; he suffers no pain; and yet he is perfectly conscious of everything that is going on around him." On his way out, Mr. Marshall wired his successor, Calvin Coolidge: PLEASE ACCEPT MY SINCERE SYMPATHY.

Pretty funny—except that two-and-a-half years later Mr. Coolidge was President. And in recent decades the Vice Presidency, powerless in itself, has become the widest road to power. Four of the last ten Vice Presidents became President, and it is almost inconceivable that any of them could have reached the White House by any other route. This actuarial fact has made Vice Presidents and candidates for Vice President more important than they used to be. The pattern of increasing importance is reinforced by the modern media campaign, which gives Vice Presidential candidates high visibility, and by the complexity of the modern Presidency, which has created opportunities for Vice Presidents to make themselves useful. The man who chooses the Vice Presidential nominee of a major party makes a consequential choice.

It now falls to Walter Mondale to make such a choice. Win or lose, he may never again exercise such unfettered power. He has become the presumptive Presidential candidate of the Democratic Party as the result of a grueling four-year process in which millions of people participated; his running mate will be designated by him alone, with fewer formal procedures and safeguards than would attend the choice of an Assistant Secretary of Commerce. We hope Mr. Mondale chooses well. Specifically, we hope he chooses Gary Hart, who would bring more to the ticket than anyone else; and if he cannot or will not choose Mr. Hart, we hope he chooses Tom Bradley.

Even without the surprising campaign he has run this year, Gary Hart would deserve to be on any short list of Democratic Vice Presidential possibilities. In his nearly ten years in the Senate he has shown himself to be an attractive and innovative figure. It is the rare politician who makes any contribution at all to the intellectual life of his time; Senator Hart, in a small way, has done so. He is not an original thinker, perhaps; but he does know how to recognize original thinking, and how to encourage it. His role in the so-called military reform movement has been especially admirable: he has given liberals, who too often regard military issues with moralistic disdain, a way to think constructively about national defense. His much-ridiculed interest in "new ideas" is rooted in an authentic intellectual curiosity that dates back to his days as a divinity student at Yale. The ideas and policy suggestions outlined in his book *A New Democracy* may not add up to an ideology, but they are perfectly genuine; and in reading the book, as Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote (TNR, June 6, 1983), "one senses a mind at work, less interested in finding formulas to propitiate interest groups than in finding serious answers to real problems."

Mr. Hart's campaign for President has greatly strengthened his appeal, and has demonstrated beyond doubt that

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he would bring important political assets to the national ticket. He gave Mr. Mondale a much closer race than anyone expected at the outset; indeed, in states where delegates were chosen directly by primary, Mr. Hart actually won a majority. In the latest Harris poll he still runs more strongly against President Reagan than Mr. Mondale does—even in the East and the Midwest. This suggests that Mr. Hart would help Mr. Mondale even with Mr. Mondale's own regional base. And of course Mr. Hart would help even more in the West, Mr. Reagan's stronghold. The choice of Mr. Hart makes sense when subjected to the traditional regional analysis. It makes even more sense from the point of view of less traditional but (in a society as mobile and atomized as ours) probably more relevant analytic categories: social class, age, and party. Mr. Hart is a candidate of proven appeal to professionals, managers, and the upper-middle class; to younger voters; and to voters who think of themselves as political independents. He is also attractive to Republicans, and his presence on the ticket would help accelerate the movement of moderate and liberal Republicans toward the Democratic Party—a movement conservatives seem bent on abetting. (See "The Right Rules," by Sidney Blumenthal, page 18.) In each case, Mr. Hart's strengths correspond to Mr. Mondale's weaknesses, and vice versa. This made them formidable foes; it would make them formidable allies.

THE UNEXPECTED bitterness of the primary campaign, normally viewed as an obstacle to a Mondale-Hart ticket, is actually an argument in favor of one. The fight turned both men into more skilled campaigners than they were before. It created a large organization—Mr. Hart's—that can be integrated into the Mondale campaign, adding to Mr. Mondale's ranks a legion of experienced, and in much of the country successful, political warriors. And if it opened a breach within the Democratic Party, the combatants' duty to close that breach is correspondingly greater.

A Mondale-Hart ticket would be the most logical way of binding up the party's wounds. But something deeper than this year's bruises might be healed. The split represented by the two men goes back to the 1968 Chicago convention and before. The issues behind that split have faded; the differences are now more cultural than political, and it is past time to lay them to rest. Just as Jimmy Carter's nomination in 1976 signaled the end of the long estrangement between southern and northern Democrats, so the nomination of a Mondale-Hart ticket would symbolize a long-overdue armistice between "traditional" and "new politics" Democrats.

By choosing Mr. Hart, Mr. Mondale would demonstrate self-confidence, generosity of spirit, and an understanding of the new currents that are moving through the Democratic Party and through society at large. Mr. Mondale's aides have been saying that in the general election campaign their candidate will try to move the debate to the territory Mr. Hart has already scouted: the future. The designation of Mr. Hart would give added legitimacy to Mr. Mondale's adoption of that theme.

Since the primary season ended, Mr. Hart, while continuing his campaign, has moved at a dignified pace toward the vicinity of Mr. Mondale's side. He has begun to make frequent mention of the fact—and it is a fact—that there is no great difference between his basic views and Mr. Mondale's. If Mr. Mondale wants to show that he is concerned about the future and is eager to move beyond the divisions and formulas of the past, it's hard to think of a better way to do so than making Mr. Hart his partner.

HOWEVER WELL Mr. Hart has behaved lately, Mr. Mondale is of course under no obligation to select someone who attacked him so relentlessly and so effectively for so long. We hope Mr. Mondale will make the effort to overcome the ill will left over from the struggle. But if, having made that effort, he feels that he and Mr. Hart are fundamentally and irreconcilably incompatible, then he must look elsewhere for a running mate.

There are arguments for any number of other Senators, governors, and members of Congress, but none of them is especially persuasive. In our view, the best alternative to a Mondale-Hart ticket would be a roll of the dice. There is no reason why Mr. Mondale should not consider the candidacy of a woman such as Representative Geraldine Ferraro of New York or (a rather more qualified and interesting candidate) Mayor Dianne Feinstein of San Francisco. But even more urgently, in our view, he should consider asking the convention to nominate Ms. Feinstein's California colleague, Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles.

At 66, Tom Bradley is a strong, mature, and serious public official. The son of Texas sharecroppers, he moved to California as a child, went to U.C.L.A. on a track and field scholarship, and served twenty-one years in the Los Angeles Police Department. He was elected to the city council in 1963, when Ronald Reagan was still making pictures, and has been mayor for eleven years. Like Richard Nixon, he ran for governor of California and lost; unlike Mr. Nixon, he lost both narrowly and gracefully, despite the role that racial prejudice clearly played in his defeat. He is universally regarded as a good mayor. Los Angeles has a so-called "weak mayor" system, but this does not mean that Mr. Bradley is weak. On the contrary, it means that he has had to call upon more than routine political skills in order to accomplish such delicate tasks as bringing the L.A.P.D., once known for brutality and excessive gunplay, under firm civilian control. Like President Reagan when he was elected, Mr. Bradley has no foreign policy experience; but if his record and instincts are any guide, he would be cautious, moderate, and occasionally firm. He knows how to write a budget, administer a government, and build a coalition. In the phrase of Bill Boyarski of the *Los Angeles Times*, Mr. Bradley "does business in the expressionless manner of a high-stakes poker player." He is most respected by those who know him best.

Despite all this, it is clear that no one would even be

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mentioning Mr. Bradley for Vice President if he weren't black. But then, no one would be mentioning Lloyd Bentsen if he weren't a Texan, or Dale Bumpers if he weren't from the South. There is nothing shocking about taking such factors into consideration. If it is legitimate to weigh geographical balance in making a ticket, then surely it is legitimate to look at less orthodox kinds of balance as well. And the most powerful arguments for Mr. Bradley's candidacy derive precisely from the fact that he is black.

The more crassly political of these arguments have been summed up in a memo prepared by the Mondale staff and leaked to Robert Shogun of the *Los Angeles Times*. The memo asserts that more than any other potential running mate, Mr. Bradley would help the ticket in California, and that he would also help in the South, the Northeast, and the industrial Midwest, where there are many black voters. It argues that the Democrats have only been getting about 38 percent of the white vote nationally—24 percent in the South—and that any losses among whites would be more than compensated for by gains among blacks and Hispanics, among whom Mr. Bradley has proved popular in California. And Mr. Bradley is a proven vote-getter. In his race for governor, he lost by only 90,000 votes, running far ahead of the rest of the Democratic statewide ticket. In all this year's primaries put together, Jesse Jackson garnered 3,266,413 votes. In a single race in a single state, Tom Bradley got 3,787,664.

But the benefits of a Bradley nomination would go well beyond Walter Mondale's electoral arithmetic. For the Democratic Party, the candidacy of Jesse Jackson has created vast opportunities and even vaster problems. The choice of Mr. Bradley would, in one stroke, seize the opportunities and solve the problems. The single accomplishment of the Jackson campaign—the mobilization of masses of new black voters—would be consolidated. The most frightful side effect of that campaign—the agonizing split between Jews and liberal whites on the one hand and blacks on the other—would be soothed and then rapidly healed. (Mr. Bradley's election was aided by a black-Jewish coalition, which he has nurtured and strengthened as mayor.) And Mr. Mondale, while cementing his alliance with the movement Mr. Jackson has helped create, would totally free himself of any temptation to accede to those of Mr. Jackson's demands that derive from pique and pride.

SO FAR, this has not been an edifying—let alone an ennobling—campaign. The nomination of Tom Bradley for Vice President would make it both. It would make the Mondale campaign, win or lose, a signal event in the history of the United States. It would turn the banal calculus of constituency politics into something fine. And we have a feeling that the nomination of Mr. Bradley—stolid ex-cop though he is—would electrify the campaign, and not only among blacks. For liberals, women, "yuppies," trade unionists, and Jewish Democrats, a campaign of ambivalence and resignation would become a campaign of fervent idealism and enthusiasm—a campaign to make the American dream come true.

ODEC LIVES

The Organization of Debt Exporting Countries is about to become a reality. The first stirrings of such a creature were evident at a meeting of Latin American finance ministers in September 1983, and in a follow-up in Quito, Ecuador, in January 1984. Last week marked the end of the gestational period. The foreign and finance ministers of eleven Latin American debtors—and not just any debtors, but the heavyweight division, led by Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil which between them owe $250 billion—met at Cartagena, Colombia, and the protestations that they had no intention of banding together in a debtor cartel grew louder. Every reminder of what they said they were not doing served as a reminder of what they could do. In keeping with the nature of their subject, the talk was arcane and polite. But the intention was unmistakable. The conference, explained Brazil's foreign minister, "did not have the aim of confrontation but rather of awakening reflection over the common interest of debtors and creditors." Common interest indeed. It is not that these countries can't pay back the principal—that's been known for a long time. They can no longer carry the interest. Latin America for the first time since the 1930s has become a net capital exporter, and it can't keep it up much longer. That's the message. And if it can't keep it up, the debtor countries will simply stop paying, and take the vastly overextended lenders—including practically all the big American banks—down with them. Hence the common interest.

After the threat, a modest proposal: a commission to coordinate the actions of the debtors and represent them in talks with lenders. Because, explained Mexico's finance minister, Jesus Silva Herzog, "the problem is not just a technical one of debtors and creditors, but of governments and other political actors." When the problem ceases to be technical, i.e., of how much and when to pay back debt, and becomes political, i.e., how lending countries are going to help the borrowers, the problem has been radically transformed. The lenders become part of the solution. The remaining question, the subject of future negotiations, becomes: Exactly how much of the unrepayable $350 billion lent to Latin America will Western banks and taxpayers have to put up?

Right now the debt burden is being borne almost entirely by the people of Latin America. And a heavy burden it is. Stringent conditions imposed by the I.M.F. for help in loan repayment have caused severe economic contraction and enormous social strains in debtor countries, jeopardizing stability in nearly every democracy from the Dominican Republic to Argentina. When riots broke out in Santo Domingo following the doubling of food prices in response to I.M.F. directives, one disgusted Reagan Administration official commented, "The I.M.F. has killed another fifty people today." Or as Congressman Jack Kemp put it, "The I.M.F. has done

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more mischief in Latin America than the K.G.B."

The I.M.F., of course, is not exactly the villain of the piece. It is simply an instrument to ensure orderly (if cruel) extraction of debt payment—and a blunt instrument at that. It was originally intended quite differently, as a short-term mechanism for handling balance-of-payment problems. In its new role as the premier neocolonial agency, it actually runs the economies of many Third World countries. These countries, however, will not put up with the burden much longer. There have already been rumblings about debt repudiation. Ecuador and Bolivia have suspended some of their payments to the banks, and Argentina not only missed several deadlines for loan extensions, but also has rejected I.M.F. terms for debt rescheduling. And if the I.M.F. is not satisfied, the banks won't lend any new money to help pay off the old loans, and the merry-go-round stops.

INDIVIDUAL debtors are afraid to go it completely alone. If one country defaults, it loses its source of foreign exchange, and its ability to trade. But a debt cartel is something else. If all the debtor countries together refuse to ante up, that will force the lending countries and the lending banks to modify their terms. And that's exactly what's going on now. A debtor cartel is still a few steps away from the level of organization of, say, OPEC. It is perhaps where OPEC was in the 1960s. At Cartagena the debtors did not set up a permanent secretariat, but they did establish a joint consultative system, with rotating chairmanship, under which they can confront their lenders together. (Argentina, the debt militant, has the first chair.) They have also established a list of seventeen proposals, a "framework" under which individual negotiations, country by country, should take place. Among these demands, reports *The New York Times*, are: a lowering of interest rates to the equivalent of what the U.S. Treasury pays; elimination of commissions and late payment penalties; compensation from the I.M.F. to debtors when interest rates rise; and a linking of debt repayment to the export earnings of a country, say, 25 to 30 percent.

The point is not that these countries will issue a communiqué renouncing their debt. They can accomplish precisely the same objective—i.e., forcing lending nations and banks to share more of the debt burden—by simply and quietly arguing that they cannot, though they wish they could, repay their debt. That is their message now, and it will get stronger and louder at the next meeting of the Eleven in September, which is timed to coincide with the meeting of the I.M.F. in Washington.

It's hard to blame the debtors for reaching for this alternative. It's also hard to see why the possibility of a debtor's cartel has been so confidently denied for so long. (Not in these pages, though. In fact, we told you so nine months ago at conception. See "From OPEC To ODEC," by Charles Krauthammer, TNR, November 28, 1983.) Still, what is to be done? It should be clear exactly what the nature of the problem is. Fantastic sums of money, in the hundreds of billions of dollars, were lent to these and other countries in the 1970s, and the money has disappeared. True, some went into industrial projects, but much went to pay off the oil debt, and to keep living standards from crashing during the OPEC-induced recession of the 1970s. The money is lost, but it is still on the books of the great banks, which list it as assets. To write the loans off in one stroke would be to destroy the banking system. Yet they will have to be written off over time. The only question is how that burden will be shared among debtor countries, the banks, and finally the taxpayers of the industrial countries.

The only matter for negotiation, and the one the debtors hope to influence by banding together, is who pays how much. We hope that most will come out of the hides of the banks. We should start with them because their monumental stupidity and greed in lending hundreds of billions of dollars in unrepayable loans as a way to deal with their OPEC surpluses of the 1970s is at the heart of the current crisis. (And also because any solution to the debt crisis will be saving them catastrophic defaults.) Inevitably there will also have to be some tightening by the debtor countries, and also inevitably, subsidies from Western central banks—i.e., taxpayers. In the end, some—perhaps most—will be paid off the way most debt held by government is paid off: inflation.

There is, however, another pocket out of which some of this lost money might be recovered. That is OPEC, an original partner in the crime. How to get money from OPEC? Seizing assets is self-defeating, since sudden violations of the rules under which everybody operates would probably be a greater threat to the system than the debt crisis itself. A better way is—or perhaps one should say, would have been—forcing down oil prices, and thus essentially taxing the oil earnings of OPEC countries and recycling them into Western and debtor economies. We had our chance in January 1983 when OPEC was on its knees in the midst of the oil glut. At that time, however, the industrial countries could not band together to do what had to be done to force the price down dramatically. Indeed, Britain and Norway made crucial decisions that winter that actually propped up OPEC prices, since they wanted to keep their own domestic oil production profitable. That characteristically myopic Western response accounts for the fact that we are still saddled with a $29-per-barrel oil price. But when the Iran-Iraq war ends, and oil production from the Gulf increases, there will be another chance to drastically reduce oil prices, perhaps even by half.

BUT TAXING OPEC won't be enough, and anyway, it can't be done right now with oil prices firm. The only way to help the debtor countries is to keep interest rates down, keep world trade up, and to encourage growth in both the industrial and developing countries. Probably the single most effective way of reducing rates would be a dramatic reduction in the U.S. budget deficit. Unfortunately, we will have to wait until after the election for that.

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As for trade, protectionist impulses in the industrial countries are enormously destructive to desperate Latin debtors, and ultimately self-defeating for the United States. Unless Brazil can export shoes and steel, for example, it has no chance of earning the hard currency with which to pay off its debt. Also self-defeating is the draconian austerity imposed by the I.M.F., which is contracting economies that need to grow, and, by forcing down imports across the board, making it hard for the same countries to find markets for their exports. The I.M.F. seems sometimes to forget that these countries also trade with each other.

One tactic that Western countries are trying is to divide the healthier debtors from their sick cousins. Thus, there were intimations before the Cartagena meeting that Mexico and Brazil should be rewarded with lower rates for having imposed harsh austerity programs. This might work for a while to isolate such recalcitrant debtors as Argentina. (After all, it would not be in the interest of a country managing to carry its debt to go under with Argentina: "It is not difficult to imagine that Argentina is looking for a way of defaulting on its debt behind a screen of Latin American solidarity," said a senior Venezuelan official at Cartagena.) But that would only work for a while, and it will not work if even the healthier debtors begin to fall further behind, and their social strains increase under the shock of sinking living standards.

Western countries are going to have to realize that they are going to have to share some of the burden of the lost loans. Kinder rescheduling, less burdensome interest rates, and special consideration for the countries in crisis, like the Dominican Republic, will be necessary. Such a realization used to be seen as an exercise in enlightened self-interest on the part of the West. The birth of ODEC is intended to eliminate the need for enlightenment.

White House Watch

Maureen's Mission

SLOWLY, painfully, often grudgingly, and anything but completely, it is beginning to dawn on the Reagan Administration that women deserve to be taken seriously. The best evidence is the fact that women will make up 45 percent of the delegates to this year's Republican National Convention in Dallas; at the 1980 convention they comprised just 29 percent of the delegates. This increase was achieved because President Reagan, Republican Party chairman Paul Laxalt, and party executive Frank Farenkopf urged state party officials by mail and on the phone to strive "without quotas" for equal representation of men and women.

There is other evidence of change. The Administration now goes out of its way to claim credit for appointing women to high office, starting with Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman on the Supreme Court, and three cabinet officers. On August 26, right before the fall campaign begins, all fifteen hundred or so female Administration appointees are scheduled to gather with Reagan on the South Lawn of the White House to observe Women's Equality Day and attempt to impress the electorate with their numbers.

From a group that four years ago seemed dedicated to the proposition that women belonged in the home, the Reaganites now show signs of beginning to understand that 57 percent of American women are in the work force, that 29 percent are heads of households, that women rightly have aspirations equal to men's, but that they need special help in fulfilling them. The Administration did not lead the way in reforming pension laws and securing increases in tax credits for child care, but it came around to endorse these ideas when promoted by women in Congress. The same is true for legislation that eliminated the so-called "marriage penalty" in the tax laws, created Individual Retirement Accounts for non-working spouses, and reduced inheritance taxes for widows. Now that all these measures have been passed into law, however, the Administration is claiming credit for them, indicating that it understands the value of special appeals to women.

What turned the Administration around is a matter of dispute. One version dates the beginning of change to June 1982, at the time of the economic summit in Paris, when Reagan's pollster, Richard Wirthlin, produced a lengthy survey documenting the Administration's difficulties in attracting support from women and warning of the dangers this could cause the President in a close reelection race. The poll led to the appointment of a working group operating under Elizabeth Dole, then Assistant to the President for Public Liaison, to consider both symbolic and substantive changes to improve Reagan's standing among women.

Conservatives in the White House and the Republican Party argued—and continue to argue—that the "gender gap" represented no threat and required no action because it really reflected more of a tendency among men to favor Reagan policies than disapproval of those policies among women. Some conservatives also argued that special efforts to win women's votes would validate the anti-Administration arguments of liberal feminist groups and undermine Reagan's appeal on the right. However, the gap was taken seriously by White House Deputy Chief of Staff Michael Deaver and former Communications Director David Gergen. Deaver backed the work of the Dole group, whose chief recommendation was the appointment of additional women cabinet members (one of whom became Dole herself), and promoted increased access to the White House for Republican women in Congress. Ironically, Dole was replaced at the White House by Faith Ryan Whittlesey, former ambassador to Switzerland, who promptly strengthened the conservative claque on women's issues.

Another important event was a meeting on March 9, 1983, with a delegation from the National Federation of Republican Women, a bastion of party regularity, which told the President that he needed to demonstrate tangible

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evidence of concern to women because the perception of his Administration fell "somewhere between being apathetic about women's issues to being anti-women." Then, two other events took place last summer. One was the Barbara Honegger affair, in which the coordinator of an Administration program to eliminate statutory bias against women in the fifty states revealed the exercise as empty. The other was the arrival in Washington of Maureen Reagan, the President's eldest daughter and one of the Republican Party's most energetic and ebullient feminists.

THE CHILD of Reagan's first marriage, to Jane Wyman, Maureen Reagan grew up in boarding schools, dropped out of college, married unsuccessfully twice, tried acting and singing, became a popular Los Angeles radio talk-show host, and ran for the U.S. Senate (with the President publicly opposing her) before offering to help her father with his political problems with women. She was given the title of special consultant to the Republican National chairman, and she moved into the White House family quarters. Some long-standing Reagan associates say that beyond its political aspects, this arrangement represents a fascinating attempt on the part of a 73-year-old father and a 43-year-old daughter to reestablish family bonds sundered thirty-six years ago by Reagan's divorce from Wyman—all under the wary eye of a possessive stepmother, Nancy Reagan.

Maureen Reagan does get things done. She began by upgrading Republican fund-raising services for women candidates for offices ranging from state legislator to U.S. Senator. "Women candidates have two unique problems," she told me. "They have trouble raising money and being taken seriously by the media. Women tend to give political candidates only about 10 percent of what males give, and males give women candidates only 10 percent of what they give to males. What we've started to do is make sure they have access to party luminaries and get them some shekels to put in their jeans. We also give them some confidence that somebody back here knows about them and is looking out for them." Reagan has organized a network of one hundred large campaign contributors—female fat cats. She has seen to it that party committees are making maximum contributions to women candidates. She makes sure that a fund-raiser for women is attached to almost all of her out-of-town speaking trips.

In February Reagan also organized a Susan B. Anthony birthday celebration in Washington that was attended by the President and fed by satellite to two other locations, raising a total of $300,000 for women candidates. The highlight of the show was a hilarious introduction of the President by his wife, who represented him as her loyal, faithful, behind-the-scenes servant, much the way Republican politicians (and Democratic ones) often condescendingly portray their wives. Satirizing a problem may be a step toward curing it.

In addition to fund-raising, Reagan has become a force for attitudinal and policy change within the Administration, a rallying point for women within the Administration and the party, and a booster for her father and the Republican Party to the outside world. She is given credit by party officials for urging her father and the party to push for 50-50 representation at the convention. She herself made some of the calls to state party officials to cajole them into increasing female representation. Reportedly she has intervened with her father and the White House speechwriting office (not always successfully) to keep sexist expressions out of his public remarks. She also has teamed up with feminists in the Administration to push for more women appointees and for legislation on child care and stronger enforcement of civil rights laws affecting women.

REAGAN has had one public battle—and, apparently, a number of internal ones—with William Bradford Reynolds, chief of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. Reynolds wanted the Administration to intervene in court against a Washington state ruling requiring that men's and women's jobs be compensated on the basis of "comparable worth" rather than market forces. Maureen Reagan wants the federal government to conduct a study of its own pay practices as a guide for states, cities, and the private sector, and to delay any legal intervention at least until a case reaches the federal appeals courts. So far, no study has been announced, but neither has Reynolds filed an *amicus* brief.

Although Reagan is not always successful in changing policy, there is no question that she has been heard. One of her feminist allies in the Administration said, "She's like Nancy Reagan. She's one woman that 'the boys'—that is, the men in the Administration—can't ignore. They may not like it, but she lives up there on the second floor of the White House, and she talks to her father every day. The boys may want to shove her under the carpet, but they can't because she won't go under the carpet. She's a bundle of creative ideas, and she's a balance of conscience against the conservatives." One gets the impression that she's a necessary balance. "On substance and style," the official said, "this Administration doesn't rate an A on women's issues by a long shot. Now, I'd give it maybe C-plus. I don't blame the President. He's no chauvinist. He's an old-fashioned gentleman, like my grandfather. When a woman enters the room, he stands up. I blame the boys on the President's staff. If they were more sensitive, he'd be better off."

Thanks to Maureen Reagan's intervention, top male White House officials and cabinet officers—and females—have set aside time to give briefings at a series of Washington seminars she organized for elected Republican women from around the country. Though an advocate of the Equal Rights Amendment and the right of women to have abortions—on both issues she is at odds with her father and Republican conservatives—Reagan is trying to gather and unify Republican women and show the world that there is room in the party for diverse (even clashing) views. She is pushing for a plank in the Republican platform that does not specifically set the party against the E.R.A. and that firmly backs the concept of women's equality. Whether that is achieved or not, she is helping to

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organize a luncheon at the Republican convention to be attended by women representatives of past Republican Administrations and of all ideological stripes within the party—from Phyllis Schlafly on the right to Mary Louise Smith and Jill Ruckelshaus (both fired from the Civil Rights Commission by the President) on the left.

According to spokesmen at the Reagan-Bush reelection committee, Maureen Reagan has become the second most sought-after Presidential surrogate speaker after Vice President Bush. She defends her father's record with intimidating certitude and disarming humor. On the Phil Donahue show, for example, she cowed the semi-informed host with assertive denials that the Reagan record was unfair, and then finished him off when he asked whether the President wasn't being sexist by remarking that women were all that kept males from reverting to cavemen. "Now, wait a minute," Reagan responded. "You can't say that women are the moderating, tender-mercy part of society on various issues, and then object when somebody says we are. I want you to be more like me. I don't want to be more like you."

REAGAN spends much of her time battling feminist groups such as the National Organization for Women, which she claims owe their loyalty more to the Democratic Party and to liberal ideology than to women. She is especially angry that NOW and other groups endorsed male Democrats Gary Hart and Frank Lautenberg for U.S. Senate seats in 1980 and 1982 against woman Republicans Mary Estill Buchanan and Millicent Fenwick. Obviously, she also is battling against the Democrats—claiming, for example, that thirteen of the fifteen state legislatures that failed to ratify the E.R.A. were Democrat-controlled. (The Democrats reply that when the E.R.A. was considered again in Congress, it won support from 84 percent of the Democrats and 32 percent of the Republicans.)

If Reagan is the leader of anti-gender gap forces for the Republicans, her opposite number is Ann Lewis, political director of the Democratic National Committee. Lewis says that Maureen Reagan "has an extraordinarily difficult task. Despite the efforts of a few well-meaning souls like her, the attitudes of this Administration toward women range from insensitive to patronizing to hostile, and women are on to the fact." Lewis ticks off the issues that condemn the Republicans: the firing of Smith and Ruckelshaus; the remark of Charles Wick, director of the U.S.I.A., that Margaret Thatcher opposed the Grenada invasion because she is a woman; opposition to E.R.A., the Grove City decision limiting the penalties against colleges practicing discrimination; the appointment of only 8 women among Reagan's first 116 federal judgeship nominations; and budget cuts affecting poor, elderly, and working-class women who are most dependent on federal help. Reagan rather lamely defends her father's Administration by saying—without proving it with numbers—that it has appointed "more women to high-ranking positions than ever before"—and by simply repeating standard denials that the poor have suffered under Republican management of the economy and claims that they actually have been helped by reduced inflation and the economic recovery. Congressional Budget Office figures, however, show that the net effect of Reagan programs is to give households with annual incomes of over $80,000 a tax cut boon of $35 billion over three years, while those under $10,000 have incurred net tax increases and benefit losses of $23 billion.

What Reagan and the Republicans really are attempting is to hold on to or bring back those women who are susceptible to Republican economic, foreign policy, and cultural appeals, and stop unduly offending them by demonstrations of sexism. In 1980 Ronald Reagan carried the women's vote over Jimmy Carter—by 46 percent to 45 percent, according to the CBS-*New York Times* exit poll; by 49 to 44, according to Gallup; and by 47 to 42, according to ABC. This year, Ann Lewis is fond of saying, the ABC-*Washington Post* poll shows that men back Reagan by 60 to 37, but women support Mondale by 48 to 44, and Gallup's latest poll shows that men support a Reagan-Bush ticket over a Mondale-Hart ticket by 59 to 40, but women favor Mondale-Hart by 53 to 44.

According to Lewis, "If women are 53.5 percent of the electorate this year, and Reagan can't get more than 45 percent of the women's vote, then to win he'll have to get two-thirds of the votes cast by white males, and I don't think he will." In 1980, Reagan got 60 percent of the white male vote, to 30 percent for Carter and 9 percent for John Anderson. According to Maureen Reagan, "All I care is that we win 51 percent of the women's vote this year, and we will." How is that possible in view of the polls? She replies, with a mock French accent: "Are you going to believe those polls, darling, or are you going to believe me?" I prefer to wait and see.

MORTON KONDRACKE

The roots of the Punjab violence.

SIKH INDIA

Bombay

INDIA IS so heterogeneous that any generalization about it tends to get stood on its head soon after being made. Thanks partly to Sir Richard Attenborough's magnificent and moving—and highly idealized—*Gandhi*, it was not so long ago that this country was seen by many Westerners as symbolizing peace and nonviolence in a world threatened by nuclear devastation and escalating terrorism. Last year's mass killings in the northeastern Indian state of Assam, in which the inhabitants of entire villages—men, women, and children—were butchered in a frenzy of communal hatred, badly dented that image. The riots two months ago in and around Bombay between

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Hindus and Muslims, which left over two hundred people dead, effectively shattered it. And now we have the recent army crackdown on extremist Sikhs in the northern state of Punjab. This not only has increased violence to a level unprecedented in the history of independent India; it also gravely threatens the integrity and already tenuous unity of the nation.

On June 5 and 6 at least one thousand people, and according to some reports, more than two thousand, were killed in a furious clash between the Indian Army and terrorist Sikhs holed up inside Sikhdom's holiest shrine, the Golden Temple at Amritsar. Some four thousand crack Indian troops, including a recently formed commando unit, surrounded the 72-acre complex and tried to force terrorists inside to surrender by directing heavy machine-gun fire at them. When this failed the troops moved inside but suffered heavy casualties as they came under a withering and surprisingly accurate fusillade from weapons that included grenades, mortars, and rockets. One of the army's armored personnel carriers received a direct hit from a Swedish anti-tank missile, which testified both to the sophistication of the arms the Sikhs possessed and to the excellence of their training.

EVENTUALLY the army was compelled to use howitzers, tanks, and heavy guns to blast away the Sikh fortifications. The central and holiest building in the Golden Temple complex, the Harmindar Sahib, was left largely unscathed as result of strict army orders not to fire at it, but two buildings in The Golden Temple complex were massively damaged. The Akal Takht, the second most important shrine, where Sikh priests issue edicts, was reduced to a shambles. Although the two moderate Sikh leaders, Harchan Singh Longowal and Gurcharan Singh Tohra, had given themselves up earlier in the battle, the head of the extremist Sikhs, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, made his last stand in the basement of Akal Takht. After fierce hand-to-hand fighting, his body, riddled with over sixty bullets, was found alongside that of Major General Shubheg Singh, the guerrilla mastermind behind the Sikh terrorist campaign of the last two years. Shubheg Singh helped train the Mukti Bahini Bengali guerrilla force, whose hit-and-run tactics paved the way for the Indian Army's swift victory over East Pakistani forces during the 1971 Bangladesh war. (He was later court-martialed and cashiered from the army for corruption.) Except possibly for the 1973 coup in Chile, one cannot recall another occasion in recent times where so much bloodletting has taken place in so short a time between a country's armed troops and its own countrymen. India under the leadership of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, has indeed come a long way from the legacy of her namesake, Mahatma Gandhi, whose abhorrence of force was so strong that he once advised Hitler's opponents not to fight back.

How did the Sikhs' "problem" come to such a tragic pass? For the answer, one needs to trace some of the main characteristics of the Sikh religion and the place of the Sikhs in Indian history.

SIKHISM IS one of the world's youngest religions, founded in the fifteenth century by Nanak, who aimed at creating a faith that would be a bridge between Hinduism and Islam. Nine gurus followed Nanak, but by the time the tenth and last one, Govind Singh, came on the scene about two hundred years later, the Sikhs had become a militant warrior sect. This was due mainly to persecution by ruling Muslim Mogul rulers of India, who regarded Sikhism as a heresy to be rooted out. Sikh gurus and their children were cruelly put to death. Thus was born the Sikh tradition of bravery and martyrdom while upholding the faith.

This was also the time when the distinctive look of the Sikhs evolved. To maintain their identity and to distinguish them from other Indian communities, all Sikhs were enjoined to wear a steel bracelet and not to cut their hair. Hence, their striking appearance: bearded and turbaned with long hair tied in a knot under the turban.

Sikh power reached its zenith a century after the death of Guru Govind Singh, when the Mogul empire was in decline and Maharaja Ranjit Singh rose to prominence. He was one of the ablest rulers of his time, and his kingdom covered much of northern India, Kashmir, and what is now Pakistan, stretching from the borders of Afghanistan in the west to Tibet in the east. But ten years after his death, the kingdom fell almost as suddenly as it had risen. The British defeated the Sikhs in some fiercely fought battles and took over the kingdom. However, impressed by the valor and fighting prowess of the Sikhs, they quickly absorbed them into their own army.

The move paid off a few years later, during the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion: while most of the country revolted against the British, the Sikhs remained loyal to them. The grateful British rewarded them by giving them generous grants of land, setting up an excellent administration in the area where Sikhs were concentrated—the state of Punjab (meaning "the land of the five rivers")—and early in this century linking the rivers through a network of canals that was later to form the basis of the agricultural prosperity of the region. Sikh soldiers distinguished themselves in the British Army on battlefields of both world wars, and at the time of independence, in 1947, they constituted about 30 percent of the Indian armed services—even though they comprised just 1.5 percent of the population of undivided India.

But the Sikh honeymoon with Britain drew to a close when Sikhs began to actively participate in the nationalist movement for independence led by Mahatma Gandhi. In 1919, at Amritsar, in an enclosed park called Jalianwala, British Brigadier General Reginald Dyer ordered his Gurkha troops to fire on an unarmed and peaceful crowd that was defying orders prohibiting assembly of more than a few persons. When the shooting ended, 379 people—mostly Sikhs—lay dead. (Dyer was later assassinated in Britain by a Sikh.) The Amritsar massacre became a potent rallying cry of Indian nationalism. Significantly, the recent storming of the Golden Temple is being com-

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pared by many Sikhs to the massacre at Jalianwala, even though there are few parallels between the two events.

Independence in 1947 and the subsequent partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan proved cataclysmic for the Sikhs. The division cut across Punjab, and millions of Sikhs, many of whom had been fairly prosperous, were uprooted from Pakistan and arrived in their new land penniless and embittered. Brutal killings accompanied the migration, with the Sikhs and the Muslims at each others' throats, as had happened during Mogul times.

Indian independence brought yet another tragedy to Sikhs: democracy. During British rule they had enjoyed separate electorates and special privileges, which more than made up for their relatively small numbers. Now, all at once, they found themselves having to compete at the level of "one man, one vote." Worse, their political leadership proved inept and was repeatedly outmaneuvered by the more experienced politicians in the central government. The extremists among the Sikh ranks began to say, "The Muslims got Pakistan, the Hindus got India, but we got nothing." Thus was born the nebulous demand for a "Sikh homeland."

At first agitation took the form of a "Punjabi Suba," a demand for a state for all those whose mother tongue was Punjabi, along the lines of the formation of the linguistic divisions then prevalent in India. The central government belatedly conceded to the demand, but only by dividing Punjab into two states—Haryana and Punjab. In the new Punjab, the Sikhs, 9 million strong, formed 52 percent of the population; another 4 million Sikhs were scattered around the rest of the country.

HOWEVER, the Punjabi Suba, instead of satisfying Sikhs, opened up a virtual Pandora's Box. A religio-cum-political party called Akalis, which had been formed in the 1920s, came to the forefront after defeating the Indira Gandhi-led Congress Party and held power in the state from 1977 to 1980. Anxious to split and weaken the Akalis, the Congress began to promote a charismatic preacher who had captured the imagination of many rural Sikhs: Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

But, as so often happens, what began as a political ploy created a Frankenstein that neither the Akalis nor the Congress could control. Called the "Mad Monk" by his detractors, Bhindranwale preached a Khomeini-style Sikh fundamentalism, advocating a return to "pure" Sikhism. His words clearly touched a chord in the Sikh masses, for thousands flocked daily to hear him. Drunk with his sudden newfound power, he began to encourage his supporters to use violence against his opponents, thus harking back to ancient Sikh history. In the six months before Bhindranwale met his death, Sikh extremists—widely considered to be his followers and operating under his instructions—killed three hundred people in and around Punjab. Hardly a day passed without a terrorist outrage, making Punjab far worse than Ulster. Many of those killed were themselves Sikhs who either opposed Bhindranwale, or were part of what Bhindranwale called the enemy "Hindu government."

Then came an ominous turn in the terrorist violence. Innocent Hindus became targets of Sikh extremists. In one such incident a bus was hijacked by armed Sikhs, and several Hindus were dragged out and shot dead simply because they were Hindus. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Gandhi's negotiations with the relatively moderate Akali leaders Longowal and Tohra for a settlement of Sikh demands were getting nowhere. These included fairly minor matters such as an amendment of the Indian federal constitution to classify Sikhism as a separate religion, the sole right to the city of Chandigarh as the capital of Punjab (it was being shared with the adjoining state of Haryana), a more equitable distribution of canal waters, and some readjustment of territory. But just when an agreement was in sight, Mrs. Gandhi backed out, for reasons which are still being debated. Her detractors say that she did so primarily to capture the Hindu vote. As a result, the moderate Sikhs began to lose ground, and Bhindranwale, with his talk of violence as the only recourse available, rose in influence. By the time he and his followers, many of whom had acquired modern weapons, probably from Pakistan, ensconced themselves in the Golden Temple, Longowal and Tohra were virtually his prisoners, and they could only watch helplessly as events moved inexorably to a tragic climax.

WHY, it is often asked by many bewildered non-Sikh Indians, should the Sikhs feel in any way deprived or discriminated against? After all, as a community they are relatively prosperous, having been mainly responsible for India's "Green Revolution"—65 percent of India's food grain reserves is produced by Sikh farmers. Sikhs also occupy prominent positions in industry and government service quite disproportionate to their numbers. What's more, they are greatly admired by most other Indians for their enterprise and hard work.

However, at bottom, the Sikhs are suffering from a profound identity crisis that neither prosperity nor admiration can assuage. Numbering just 13 million in a nation of over 700 million, they fear they will be engulfed in and absorbed by the Hindus. The signs of such an absorption are already very much present, and they strike an irrational terror in orthodox Sikh minds. Many educated and Westernized Sikhs have given up the outward symbols of their faith—the unshorn hair, turban, and flowing beard—because they find them inconvenient and out of place in today's world. Sikh religious leaders fear that if this continues, in another generation or two these "modernized" Sikhs will, in effect, become Hindus. Hence the fanatical and almost pathological attachment to symbols. (In the midst of an interview with Bhindranwale, a Sikh reporter was reprimanded for having plucked her eyebrows.) Hence, too, the growing insistence upon some kind of "Sikh homeland"—the extremists wanting a totally independent country, the moderates a state within the Indian union but with a great degree of autonomy—where

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the Sikh faith can be protected and nurtured in relative isolation.

Though the army crackdown has for the time being suppressed such sentiments, they are bound to surface again, probably with even greater vigor. (The bloodshed at Golden Temple already serves as a potent symbol of martyrdom for the Sikh cause.) This is likely to be Mrs. Gandhi's greatest challenge in the coming months, and could determine her political future. Her action has been widely welcomed by non-Sikhs, though many feel that had she moved against Bhindranwale and his terrorist followers earlier, the death toll would not have been so great. By delaying, she cut the ground out from under the feet of the moderate Sikhs, who now stand discredited in the eyes of their community.

Mrs. Gandhi desperately needs a Sikh leader—or leaders—who has credibility. That person could well be the President of India, Zail Singh, a devout Sikh who has distanced himself to some degree at least from the government action. Ultimately, however, what may prove Mrs. Gandhi's greatest ally is, ironically, something about which she has been less than enthusiastic: India's still vigorous democratic system, which has shown a remarkable capacity to withstand the strains of a nation with fifteen major languages and diverse sects and communities. The example of Pakistan under a military dictatorship is close at hand. It was unable to cope with Bengali demands for greater autonomy in East Pakistan, and split into two nations after a war with India and enormous bloodshed. A similar call in southern India for a "Dravidstan" (a homeland for the ethnic Dravidians of the South), on the other hand, eventually died out when the party making the demand came to power through the polls. Freedom of expression and representative government are long-forgotten words in most of the Third World. But for India, they are its very lifeline.

RAHUL SINGH

Rahul Singh, a Sikh, is editor of the Bombay edition of *The Indian Express*, India's largest-circulation daily.

A briefing for Fritz.

TIPS FOR VEEPS

(The following briefing paper was prepared for Walter Mondale in anticipation of his interviewing prospective nominees for Vice President.)

LET ME congratulate you on being one of the approximately twelve persons chosen from the adult population of the United States for consideration as my running mate in the Presidential campaign of 1984. There are seven points I would like to cover in this interview.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

First, loyalty. Loyalty to the President is the prime virtue in a Vice President. As you know, as Vice President I supported many positions taken by President Carter—the MX missile, the sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia, and the grain embargo against the Soviet Union, to name three—even though I didn't believe in them. I expect from you a loyalty even greater than I showed in these examples. Indeed, I want in my Vice President a loyalty comparable, if not equal, to that which I showed my mentor, Hubert Humphrey, in support of the Vietnam War. As you may remember, I was an active public supporter of that war—even though, as Ross Baker pointed out in his book *Friend and Foe in the U.S. Senate*, I was against it "in principle and by instinct"—right up until January of 1969, shortly after the end of the Johnson-Humphrey Administration. This is the kind of loyal support I expect from you, with the understanding that once I, or we, are out of office, you may repudiate any position you took in support of me.

Second, health. I expect a full and frank health and medical report from you. This is consistent with the precedent set by Jimmy Carter in 1976 when he made public his physical disabilities and challenged other candidates to do the same. He published the fact that he was allergic to hops, beans, and Swiss (not American) cheese. (However, he omitted to report a latent hemorrhoidal condition, which emerged later.) Other candidates then admitted to, even boasted of, such disabilities as enlarged prostates and urinary tract infections.

HAVING SHOWN the way himself, Mr. Carter then asked those who applied to him for the Vice Presidency in Plains, Georgia, to file a medical report. You may recall that I made public at that time my relatively high blood pressure, which is fully controlled by medication. Subsequently, I asked Mr. Carter whether I could add something to my report. He said that I might, and then publicly stated that he was very much impressed by my integrity in offering the additional information, since, as he said, the disability I reported was one which he probably would never have discovered. The disability I reported was my hernia.

I do not cite this example because I am indifferent to your major ailments. On the contrary, I want to know about them, but I also want to know about your minor disabilities, even those which you might think are irrelevant. Irrelevancy in a Vice President is sometimes very much to the point. George Reedy, who was Lyndon Johnson's press secretary for a time, gave as a contributing reason for his resignation the fact that he had sore feet and was unable to take care of them properly as press secretary to the President. Corns and other such disabilities, as well as the types of health problems that are noted in television advertisements (minor arthritis, split ends, acid stomach, etc.), may be unimportant in the general population, and

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even in a President. But in a Vice President they may be critical.

Third, money. I must ask you for full financial disclosure. I would like to see your income tax returns and make them public, and also a listing of your assets and your income sources. If you, like me, have been retained by large corporations or law firms, I hope that the annual fees and salaries you received were in the range of $500,000, and that you were paid by only two or three corporations. Influence, or the appearance of it, is better when owed to a few of the best than when owed to many of lesser status. You need not explain the particular services you have given to those who have retained you. You may, if you like, speak of "generics, rather than of specifics," as my press secretary did in explaining my connection with Control Data Corporation and my law firm affiliation. Or you may employ the "thematic" approach we have been using in writing the party platform. Also, if you have taken campaign contributions from a PAC, I understand and forgive. However, I suggest that you refund the money, or promise to refund it, if you have not already done so.

FOURTH, subservience. The importance of subservience in a Vice President is a matter of form as well as of substance. For example, if elected I may be moved in midterm to do what President Carter did—namely, ask for the resignations of all high government officeholders. When President Carter made this request, I gave some thought to how I might tender him my resignation without running afoul of the Constitution, but I found this to be impossible. Therefore, my no. 1 assistant, Dick Moe, was obliged to offer to resign in my place. I saw this act as not unlike that of Abraham, when he offered Isaac, his firstborn son, for sacrifice at the request of the Lord. Isaac was returned to Abraham by a merciful God, and Richard was returned to me by a gracious President. If I should make a request for general resignations, I hope you will offer, in the spirit of Abraham and without urging from me, the political equivalent of your firstborn for my approval or rejection.

Fifth, defense (negative mode). If I am caught in a foreign policy fiasco and am being criticized by other politicians, I expect you to be ready to charge those critics with being un-American. There is ample precedent for such defense, amounting almost to a tradition. Nixon did it for Eisenhower, Agnew for Nixon, and I for Carter. You will do no less for me.

Sixth, defense (positive mode). You must be ever ready to mount a positive defense, as I did when President Carter was under challenge from within the party in 1980. The best defense is, I believe, adjectives—lots of them. You may recall that at the time I referred to Mr. Carter as "an honest, caring, intelligent, brilliant, committed, courageous, experienced President." This defense, in basic design, is not very different from that which President Reagan is promising as a part of his space war program: the use of large quantities of chaff to confuse enemy radar and permit the missile to penetrate to its target. Similarly, large quantities of adjectives dazzle the listener into letting the noun slip through.

If you are called back for a second interview, I will expect you to have memorized the adjectives listed above. I would like you to submit at least five additional adjectives that you might use to describe me, not including "real" or "ready," which I reserve for my own use.

Seventh, cosmetics. The questions raised in this final category of concern may seem trivial, even irrelevant. They may be both; nevertheless, they may become central to the campaign. Since there is a suspicion that the Republican Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates both dye their hair, or have it dyed, I must ask you to submit a lock of your own for chemical analysis. In other areas of the body, you need not report minor cosmetic surgery, or physical aids such as lifts in the heels of your shoes, but only those things which might have significant political or psychological consequences. If you have had a Carol Burnett-type operation giving you a forceful, challenging jaw line instead of a natural weak chin, please enclose the relevant X-rays.

ESSAY QUESTION

As Miss Isaacs, my press secretary, has said, one of the objectives of my campaign is to "elucidate" the voters. If Lincoln is properly called "The Great Emancipator," and Reagan "The Great Communicator," I seek to go down in history as "The Great Elucidator." I would like you to submit an essay of five hundred words on the topic, "Walter Mondale, The Great Elucidator."

Please leave your name, address, Social Security number, and telephone number with my secretary as you leave.

EUGENE J. MCCARTHY

Eugene J. McCarthy is from the same state as Walter Mondale, and is therefore barred by the Constitution from becoming his running mate.

William Shawn and the Temple of Facts.

DEPT. OF AMPLIFICATION

A DYSPEPTIC friend, who earnestly dislikes *The New Yorker* for its smug insularity, its tiny dada conceits passing as wit, its whimsy presented as serious politics, and its deadpan narratives masquerading as serious journalism, writes:

I have had my suspicions about the vaunted *New Yorker* fact-checking department ever since I met a *New Yorker* fact checker at a dinner party several years ago. This fellow—a

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real individual, not a composite—regaled the gathering with tales of chartering airplanes to measure the distance between obscure Asian capitals, sending battalions of Sarah Lawrence girls to count the grains of sand on a particular beach referred to in an Ann Beattie story, and suchlike tales of heroic valor in the pursuit of perfect accuracy. After several hours of this (actually, one hour, seventeen minutes, and fifty-three seconds), he turned to me with a polite smile and said, "Tell us about your fact-checking system at THE NEW REPUBLIC."

I was editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC at the time. I replied, "You're looking at it."

He turned pale. Actually, he didn't turn pale. I embroider. But he did say, "That's odd, because if I'm checking a story in *The New Yorker* and find the fact I need in THE NEW REPUBLIC, I consider it checked."

So I was less shocked than many people, though probably more pleased than most, at the recent revelation that a *New Yorker* writer named Alastair Reid has been fabricating the details in his reports for the magazine over more than two decades. A bar in a Spanish town was invented and populated with chatty locals; a son at Yale was turned into a more colorful grandniece; that weariest of all journalistic devices, an opinionated taxi driver, was conjured up; and so on.

The Wall Street Journal, which uncovered this story, has known sorrow itself recently. When one of its reporters was caught trading in the stocks he was touting in the paper, the *Journal* investigated and published a brutally frank report on its own front page. That is not *The New Yorker*'s style. This is a publication that doesn't even run letters to the editor, and it will only publish a correction once in a blue moon under the genteel heading, "Department of Amplification." The initial response to the *Journal's* story from William Shawn, *The New Yorker*'s legendary editor, was in keeping with this self-satisfied tradition. Though the revelation had come from Reid himself, Shawn simply refused to acknowledge it. He stonewalled. "I've worked with Mr. Reid for many, many years, I trust him completely. . . . He's a man of utter integrity, and that's all I have to know." Case closed. The world's best fact-checking department is very nice, but please don't confuse Mr. Shawn with the facts about his own operation.

WITHIN A DAY, stonewall segued into cover-up (though, to pursue the Watergate imagery, never into anything so unrefined as a modified limited hangout). Shawn told *The Washington Post* that Reid had changed the details of his Franco-era reports from Spain in order to protect his sources from reprisal. This was a concern Reid had failed to mention in his several homilies, quoted in the *Journal*, about the difference between facts and truth. It also fails to explain why Reid made up anecdotes like the touching little number about meeting the poet Czeslaw Milosz and telling him that they were born in the same year ("He lighted up at once . . ."), when in fact Reid is fifteen years younger. Nor does it explain where those fact checkers were when Reid was spinning his petty fantasies.

Shawn also took an ugly swipe at the young reporter who'd written the story for *The Wall Street Journal*. "This was a very subtle matter and this young woman who did the piece is not a subtle writer," he huffed to the *Post*. There was no suggestion that she'd gotten her facts wrong. But it appears that William Shawn regards "not subtle" as a more damning indictment of a journalist than "not accurate."

Actually, there's something to this point of view. Alastair Reid is right to protest that the fundamental truth of his articles shouldn't be judged on the basis of a few phony flourishes. The ornamental details he faked have about as much to do with the soundness of his reports as the broken pediment on top of the AT&T Building reveals about the structure underneath. Bars, taxis, sunsets . . . it's just decoration. But where does this leave *The New Yorker*, a weekly monument to the proposition that journalism consists of the endless accretion of tiny details?

> Shortly after noon on Monday, January 24, 1983, the principal members of Governor Mario M. Cuomo's staff assembled in the Governor's office, on the second floor of the State Capitol, in Albany.

SO BEGINS part two of a recent profile, majestically entitled, "Governor." This piece (by a good journalist in other contexts) goes on to describe every other person at the meeting; what Cuomo was wearing—"a white shirt, a red striped tie, and a three-piece gray suit"; and where he sat—"at a glass-topped table." You're probably wondering what was on the table. Well, "it was bare except for a telephone console and a black loose-leaf binder. . . ." If you're also wondering what all this has to do with anything, where the article is going, or why the author has written it, you're out of luck. To pique the reader's interest with a clever title or a snappy lead or—God forbid—a line or two at the top summarizing what the article has to say would be vulgar salesmanship.

Indeed, the very notion of an article having something to say offends William Shawn, who told *The Wall Street Journal* that his magazine "is as close to being scientific in its objectivity as reporting can be," with "no advocacy, . . . no prejudices." Just the facts, and plenty of 'em. Of course this pretense is as phony as Alastair Reid's grandniece. The Cuomo profile, for example, radiates admiration for the governor. This admiration undoubtedly is justified. But the pretense that no argument is being made saves the *New Yorker* writer from having to present and defend the argument he or she is, in fact, making. The reader's critical facility is benumbed right there in the opening paragraph with the information that the New York State Capitol is in Albany, and the governor's office is on the second floor.

Not long after meeting the *New Yorker* fact checker, I found myself in a job interview with the legendary Mr. Shawn himself, which foundered on this very question of "the facts." The interview wasn't going too well anyway,

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as it took the form of a vicious duel of competitive gentility, and I was at a hopeless disadvantage against an old master. Mr. Shawn's posture was that I was a terribly busy and important man who, motivated by purest charity, had taken the time out of a hectic schedule to spend a few moments brightening the life of an aged and forgotten invalid. "Oh, Mr. Kinsley," he cooed. "Thank you so very, very much for coming to see me. It's so awfully kind of you," and so on and so forth. Thoroughly disoriented, since this was a meeting any young journalist would kill for, and since only moments earlier I had been ushered into his office as if to a shrine, I could only murmer, "Not at all, not at all."

THE DISCUSSION eventually turned from the topic of my condescension in agreeing to meet with the editor of *The New Yorker* to *The New Yorker* itself. What, as an editor, did I think of it? Well, I said as tentatively as possible, I thought that some of the articles tended perhaps to go on just a bit, and that occasionally it was hard to follow (I refrained from saying "detect") the thread of the writer's thinking. One function of an editor, I recklessly opined, is to ask while reading a manuscript: "What's the point?"

"Oh, Mr. Kinsley," said Mr. Shawn piteously. He looked deeply wounded, as if I'd taken this thing called "the point" and run him through with it. O.K., so he didn't. I exaggerate. A bit. He did say with a sigh, as if describing a treasured family custom which an outsider couldn't possibly be expected to understand, "Here at *The New Yorker*, Mr. Kinsley, we believe in letting the facts speak for themselves." Soon he was waltzing me toward the elevator, thanking me deliriously for visiting him and clutching my pile of writing samples to his bosom like a gift of flowers.

The June 18 *New Yorker* has an article about corn. It's the first in what appears to be a series, no less, discussing the major grains. What about corn? Who knows? Only *The New Yorker* would have the lofty disdain for its readers to expect them to plow through 22,000 words about corn (warning: only an estimate; the TNR fact checkers are still counting) without giving them the slightest hint why. Here is how it starts (after a short introductory poem):

> When the New England farmer and botanist Edward Sturtevant retired, in 1887, as head of the New York Agricultural Experiment Station, in Geneva, he left behind a bulky manuscript that was published in 1919, twenty-one years after his death, as "Sturtevant's Notes on Edible Plants." Dr. Sturtevant, who was also a graduate of the Harvard Medical School but never practiced medicine, had scoured the world's botanical literature for mentions of all the plants that human beings were known to have eaten (he did not count tree bark, which in times of famine was often one of them), and had come up with, among more than three hundred thousand known plant species, two thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven edibles. (Latter-day scientists believe he may have missed as many more.) But, of all these, only a hundred and fifty or so have ever been widely enough consumed to figure in commerce, and of those a mere handful have been of any real consequence.

Now, there are some facts for you. No doubt every single one of them has been checked. You stand in awe as they tumble toward you, magnificently irrelevant, surrounded by mighty commas, mere numbers swollen into giant phrases ("two thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven"), all finally crashing over you with the bravura announcement that nothing you have just read is "of any real consequence." How true this is! From the end of the paragraph, you gaze back on receding vistas of inconsequence, as far as the eye can see. Even supposing we would like a bit more information about corn, and even supposing we might be relieved to know how many other plants, edible and otherwise, are *not* going to be discussed in this article, why are we being told about a man whose count apparently was off by half? Even supposing we need to know about Dr. Sturtevant's book, when it was published, and when the good doctor died, why do we need to know when he retired? Even—stretching it—supposing that we need to know that this gentleman "was also a graduate of the Harvard Medical School," why, oh why, do we have to learn that he "never practiced medicine"? As for the business about tree bark, that has just got to be conscious self-parody.

Meanwhile, in the "Talk of the Town" section of the same issue, the anonymous voice of Eustace Tilly is opining about Central America. It is in favor of freedom and against repression. A sound position. Offered in defense of it, however, is this dubious proposition:

> Moreover, quite apart from ethical considerations, we find that repression abroad is eventually inimical to liberty at home. In the long run, either the repression abroad or the liberty at home must give way.

That is a typical piece of *New Yorker* political analysis: sweet, but not terribly acute. It's the kind of thinking you get when you're committed to the pretense that you're not thinking. The world would have a pleasing symmetry if support for repression abroad inevitably produced repression at home, but there is no such pleasing symmetry in the world outside 25 West 43d Street. The British Empire, for example, had a good long run, during which Britain itself became more democratic, not less, and which ultimately broke down for reasons having nothing to do with concern about repression at home. How did this one get past the fact checkers? Simple. It's not a "fact" of the checkable sort. *The New Yorker* has no sense checkers. Indeed, because of its pretense that all that matters are "the facts," its hermetic editorial process, and its refusal to submit what it publishes to a reality test such as letters to the editor, there is less of a check on nonsense there at *The New Yorker* than at any other major publication.

"I venture to say that *The New Yorker* is the most accurate publication not only in this country, but in the entire world," Mr. Shawn ventures to say. This would be an unimpressive boast, even if it were true.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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Party favors for Republican conservatives.

THE RIGHT RULES

THE DEMOCRATS will enter San Francisco with a busted muffler and a hissing radiator, trailing clouds of steam and smoke. By contrast, the Republican National Convention in Dallas promises to be a purring limousine of air-conditioned efficiency. Of course, there may be a few platform debates testing conservative purity over issues such as the gold standard. But there will be no rancorous divisions like those that roil the Democrats. Everything appears settled; everything will work according to the rules. Yet the rules themselves were not handed to the Republican National Committee in the form of stone tablets, and the absence of a full-fledged debate on these particular rules at the 1984 convention signals an enormous change within the party. For the rules are the codification of the conservative triumph, which has taken years to achieve.

According to these rules, convention delegations from the West and Sunbelt states are given far greater weight than those from the Midwest and Northeast; and white Protestants receive far greater representation than Catholics, Jews, Hispanics, and blacks. The traditional Republicans have lost control of their party. Conservatives are in the saddle. Their method—their rules—happens to provide specific testimony to the generic Democratic charge of "unfairness."

Within the Republican Party there is some dissent. For years, Josiah Lee Auspitz, a former president of the Ripon Society, aide to President Nixon, and former member of the R.N.C. "outreach" committee, has sought to end what he calls the "discriminatory" nature of the rules. They are, he says, "a violation of the principles of the party." In 1980 he presented his evidence to the Rules Committee, and it agreed to authorize a study and report to the 1984 convention. But there has been no study. The process has been so exasperating for Auspitz that he has lost his reticence about revealing his correspondence with key Republican officials. To be sure, Auspitz is known within party circles as a moderate. He contends, however, that his motivation in pressing the point is not factional. "It's an argument for the integrity of the party," he says.

Auspitz has demonstrated a history of interest in the question. "The great sea changes in party history are evident in the rules of the party," he wrote in a 1982 article, "A Republican View of Party," published in *The Public Interest*. "Rules do not, as any social scientist will attest, have an empirically verifiable causal effect upon party characteristics—any more than the First Amendment 'causes' freedom of speech—but in a rule-of-law culture they are important barometers of deeper attitudes, which they both reflect and entrench."

The Republican rules are an inheritance from the Coolidge era. Coolidge, whose portrait Reagan has hung in the Cabinet Room, combined nostrums of supply-side tax cuts with racial theories. "Nordics deteriorate when mixed with other races," he said. A Republican-controlled Congress, under the influence of the nativist temper, passed new immigration laws in the early 1920s, virtually halting the flow into the country of Catholics and immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. At the 1924 convention nominating Coolidge, Republicans approved the "uniform victory bonus," which granted three extra delegates to those states which supported the Republican Presidential candidate, regardless of the size of the state's population. The convention then was comprised of only about a thousand delegates, so this was an inflation of about 12 percent. The change tilted the party toward sparsely populated, ethnically homogenous states, especially in the West.

The rules that had their origin in the bigotry of the 1920s now serve as a mechanism for right-wing ascendancy. They have become a crucial means by which the conservative movement has forged a permanent majority within the party.

In 1964 Barry Goldwater captured the convention so decisively that the bonuses weren't needed for his margin of victory. The clearest confrontation between the new conservatives and the traditional Republicans at that convention came on a roll-call vote on the Civil Rights Act, supported by the Congressional Republicans. That motion in favor of civil rights lost—a symbolic repudiation of the first principle of the historic party, and an advance for the conservative cause. The right-wing takeover did not yet wholly encompass the party structure, but the rules now in place had prepared the way for that, too.

AT THE 1968 convention Ronald Reagan and Nelson Rockefeller attempted to block Richard Nixon's nomination on the first ballot. The stop-Nixon strategy centered upon big-state governors. One of them, John Rhodes of Ohio, talked up a Rockefeller-Reagan "dream ticket." Nixon's base lay in the smaller western states. If Nixon were blocked, Reagan figured those states would move into his column and give him the nomination. But the underrepresentation of the big states gave Nixon room to maneuver. He made a deal with Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina for southern delegates, blocking Reagan. Nixon walked a tightrope among factions: regulars, Rockefeller moderates, and conservatives. Nothing demonstrated his chronic strategizing so much as his selection of Spiro Agnew as his running mate, who to Nixon represented a centrist position within the party.

In 1972 the moderate Ripon Society brought suit against the R.N.C. to eliminate the victory bonus. The convention met under a federal district court order to draft a new formula. That order, however, was stayed by the most conservative Justice of the Supreme Court, William Rehnquist, who had been petitioned by six western Republican state chairmen. A new formula was then drafted by Senator John Tower of Texas and Representative Jack Kemp of New York (a former Reagan aide). The Tower-Kemp change actually *intensified* the victory bonus effect. If a

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state had enough Republican officeholders, its delegation could now win up to a maximum of nine bonus delegates. In addition, any state carried by the Republican Presidential ticket got another bonus amounting to 60 percent of the state's electoral college vote. The moderates fought these changes. Their substitute proposal prompted a roll-call vote—the first since the 1964 balloting on civil rights. The main speech against the moderates' substitute was delivered by Ronald Reagan, who denounced it as a rejection of "pure democracy." Under the old rules, the maximum bonus could amount to about a quarter of the convention delegates. The new rules raised that to about a third. For conservatives, this seemingly arcane battle was a rehearsal for the 1976 convention.

GERALD FORD was able to hold on to the party nomination in 1976 only because Nixon had beaten George McGovern in a landslide four years before—which meant that every state except Massachusetts earned the bonus. But even with that advantage and the advantage of his incumbency, Ford was unable to prevent Reagan from bringing the nomination struggle to the convention floor.

In 1980, after twelve years of trying, Reagan finally won it all. At the convention, the nine largest states, each with more than two million Catholics, more than 80 percent of the Jewish vote, and 45 percent of the electoral college vote, received only 27 percent of the bonus delegates. Reagan, however, beat Jimmy Carter too decisively for the rules to work to their full effect in 1984 within the party; only five states failed to earn victory bonuses. In any case, Reagan hardly needed the bonuses.

By now, Auspitz was waiting patiently for the Rules Committee to begin its long-promised study. He began a lengthy, Kafkaesque correspondence with party leaders. Time and again, he cited the issue as an opportunity for the party to dispel the "fairness" question raised by Democrats. Republican Party chairman, Senator Paul Laxalt of Nevada, referred Auspitz's letters to various party officials without ever addressing their substantive content. (His Presidential ambitions in 1988 would be favored by victory bonuses to his western base.) Still, there was no study.

On February 17, 1984, the R.N.C.'s counsel, Richard Allan Moore, wrote to Auspitz, saying: "The simple fact is that no one now has the time, even if he had the inclination, to rethink the entire delegate allocation formula, starting with your hypothesis." Auspitz pointed out that the contradiction between the lofty sentiments of the rules preamble ("the party of opportunity for all") and the reality of the rules could hurt Reagan and the party. On June 2 Moore responded: "The suggestion that the Democrats have any standing to accuse us of unfair rules is, as Jesse Jackson wishes he knew to say, a *meshuggeneh* idea." Moore added, in a tone of finality, that a study of the rules was not "necessary, desirable, or appropriate."

Instead of a new study on the fairness of the rules, the R.N.C. decided this year to compound the victory bonus effect. A new rule was created—a rule that may be called the "white man's bonus," for it stipulates that no state shall have fewer delegates than delegations from Puerto Rico or the District of Columbia. Previously, the bonuses had been rationalized as incentives, reflecting the Republican view of politics as a marketplace. The "white man's bonus," however, is an unearned subsidy, widening the gap between big and small states, ethnics and white Protestants. Incentives have become entitlements to the conservative geographic base.

In the past, midwestern regulars traditionally brokered internal party squabbles. Ray Bliss of Ohio, the late Republican national chairman, was a sterling example of the type. Now the midwestern leadership is in retreat. Robert Michel of Illinois, the House Minority Leader, has lost control over the young conservatives, who subject him to occasional humiliations. Senator Charles Percy of Illinois, facing a strong challenge from a liberal Democrat, Paul Simon, is harassed by the New Right. Several prominent New Right leaders, such as Richard Viguerie, have gone so far as to endorse Simon. They would rather defeat a factional enemy than support the party's candidate. And within the White House there is no spokesman for the Ford Republicans. There is no honest broker within the party anymore to maintain the old factional balance. Rules reform in the interest of "fairness," as suggested by Auspitz, may be nostalgia for a party that no longer exists.

THE CONSERVATIVE hegemony over the party will probably be made permanent in 1988. If the Democratic candidate, Walter Mondale, carries enough northeastern and industrial midwestern states, the full effect of the bonuses will have their impact on the party. Then the internal realignment will be irreversible and completed. Moderates will become like the Republicans in the old Solid South. By campaigning for the conservative Reagan, the moderate governors and Senators will be bidding among themselves to become the leading court moderates. In internal party affairs, their voices will become almost irrelevant. They will not be needed for the nomination or the election of a Republican Presidential candidate. The Republican Party will no longer have much of a political interest in a large part of the country. And the party will become a subsidiary of the conservative movement; the debates within the party will mirror those within the movement, even more than they do today.

If the likely scenario for 1988 comes to pass, there will be three obvious results. First, neither George Bush nor Howard Baker will be able to survive an onslaught in the primaries from a united right. Consider what would have happened to Ford in 1976 if the delegate situation at that convention had been dictated by the conditions that may prevail in 1988 with Mondale victories in Frostbelt states. If one does the arithmetic, one finds that given a closer race in 1972, under the new rules the slim Ford margin in 1976 would have turned into a slim Reagan one. Since then, census shifts have made the conservative margin more comfortable. At the 1984 convention, there will be no nonsense about one man, one vote. For example, Alaska will have one delegate per 22,000 population, while

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New York will have one per 129,000—a 5.8-to-1 disparity.

The moderates are reduced now to waiting for Reagan to die in office—their only hope. Against a solid conservative front, Bush and Baker are virtually untenable. And even if Bush succeeded to the Presidency, the dynamics of the convention would work against him.

Moreover, moderate Republican candidates, by losing influence within the party they once owned, have lost an appealing justification for election. In Massachusetts, for example, Elliot Richardson is arguing that he should be sent to the Senate to give the state leverage with the sitting Administration. But Richardson and other moderates lack political consequence within the new Republican establishment. The shift in the party, which will become more severe in the future, seriously undercuts the moderates' rationale with the voters.

Third, the moderate Republican voters are increasingly turning away from their party because they have been made to feel worse than useless. In 1980, John Anderson's independent Presidential bid gave them a haven as they edged away from their own party. In 1984 Gary Hart attracted many of them. In fact, one of the most reliable predictors of his success was whether independents and Republicans could vote in a given Democratic primary. The realignment within the Republican Party is provoking a realignment within Democratic ranks. In the Northeast and Midwest there is a large pool of potential voters available to Democrats that was not so available to them before. The drift of this constituency into the Democracy will tend to strengthen candidacies such as Hart's. To the extent that this happens, moderate Republican politicians will disappear, stiffening the conservative stance and regionalism of the party—and completing the break with what was left of the Lincolnian tradition. The Republican Party's continuity with its past will be limited essentially to its name.

The kind of polarized political system the parties were originally constructed to prevent is coming into being for the first time since the early Republican Party won the Presidency. The rigidity of the Republican rules is a portent of a sectional and ideological politics.

SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

Would you buy a new car from this man?

THE IACOCCA MYSTIQUE

BY JAMES K. GLASSMAN

SOMETHING about Lee Iacocca inspires exaggeration. Twenty years ago, as general manager of Ford, he made the cover of both *Time* and *Newsweek* with his hot new car, the Mustang. *Time* began its story this way, Iacocca in the driver's seat:

> The trim white car rolled restlessly through the winding roads of Bloomfield Hills, like a high-strung pony dancing to get started on its morning run. . . . The driver of a Volkswagen raised his fingers in a V-for-victory sign. As the car picked up speed and headed southward toward Detroit, a flickering trace of satisfaction crossed its driver's hawklike face. He carefully knocked the ash from his Ignacio Haya Gold Label cigar into the shiny new dashboard tray. At each traffic light, his dark eyes surveyed the car's interior and his fingers roamed over every piece of metal and fabric within reach. At one light, the driver of a Chevrolet Impala pulled alongside and mouthed through his closed window: "Is that it?" He was left behind in the exhaust. As the white car approached a school bus and slowed again, the windows flew up and the children inside chanted: "Mustang! Mustang! Mustang!"

Now, twenty years later, the man sitting next to me on the plane to New Orleans leans over to look at the book I'm reading, *Going for Broke*, by Michael Moritz and Barrett Seaman. On the cover is Iacocca, chairman of the board of Chrysler Corporation, wearing a light blue shirt with white cuffs and collar. Iacocca is pointing manfully at the reader as, behind him, in a tableau of Socialist Realism, three autoworkers in caps peer off the page and into the future. They are ready to follow Lee Iacocca anywhere. And so is the man sitting next to me on the plane—a C.P.A. from Houston. "Iacocca," he says. "That's a great man. He'd make a great President."

As long ago as 1982, long before he'd paid off Chrysler's government-guaranteed loans, Iacocca was being touted in Horace Busby's political newsletter as a terrific Presidential candidate for the Democratic Party. Since then, Iacocca has done little to discourage the idea, dropping such hints as: "I think there's a vacuum out there. If I were inclined, it would be a good time."

It is now safe to say that Iacocca will not be running for

James K. Glassman, publisher of THE NEW REPUBLIC, recently won the Washington Dateline Award for business and financial writing. John T. Hompe contributed to the research for this article.

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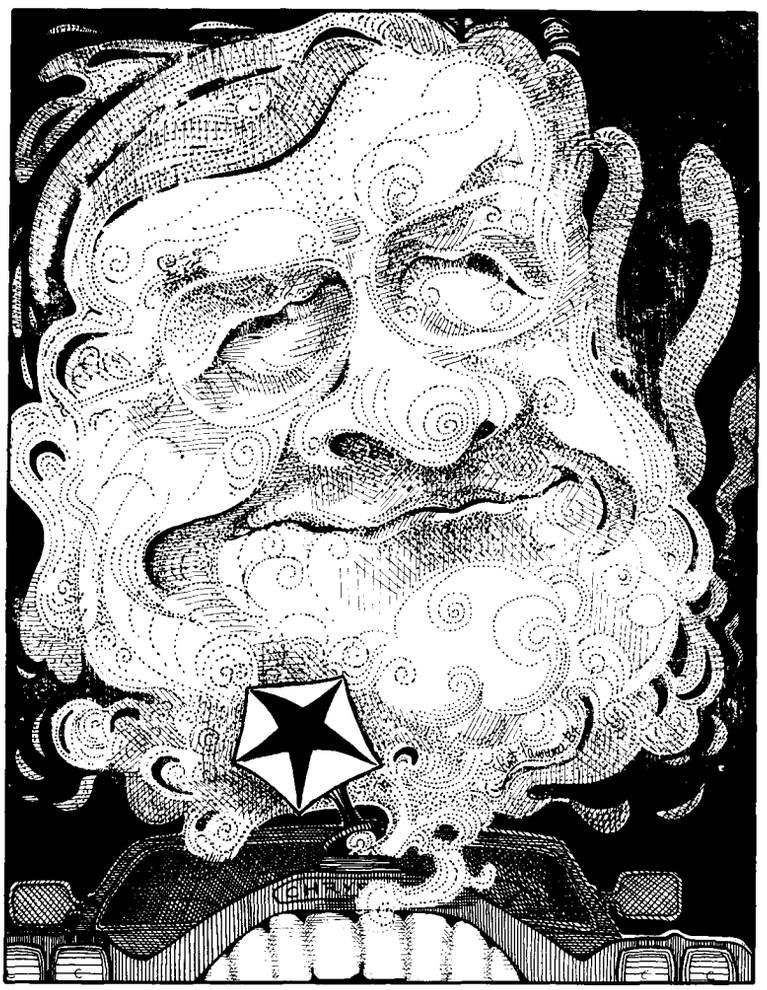
President on the Democratic ticket in November. In fact, it's not even certain that he's a Democrat. In 1971 he called himself a "fairly independent Republican." And last year, asked about his party affiliation, he answered: "Probably independent, but leaning toward Democrat. I used to be a Democrat when we were poor in the 1930s. Then we got rich and I became Republican. Now, I'm dealing with too many poor people, I guess, and I have swung back to being a Democrat." Still, Great Mentioners like Robert Novak are talking about him as Walter Mondale's running mate. Does Mondale want him? No. "Iacocca is exactly what Mondale doesn't need," says a close observer of the campaign. "He's a hero, but he's also a loose cannon. He'd be totally beyond Mondale's control, and there would be gaffes galore." Part of Iacocca's charm is that you never know what he'll say next. But, in politics, spontaneity is a liability.



LEE IACOCCOA BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

So, bereft of the Presidency and Vice Presidency, what's left for Lee Iacocca? Are we squandering a precious national resource? Not exactly. He's still a rich lode for miners of hyperbole. Here is Sean Fitzpatrick of Campbell-Ewald, the advertising agency of a competitor, Chevrolet: "In a period of time when there are no heroes, Lee Iacocca emerged as the champion of the most celebrated underdog of all time. Capturing the spirit of Faulkner's Nobel Prize address, he showed us that man—and Chrysler—will not merely endure, he will prevail."

The lionization of Lee Iacocca should not be surprising. In an industry filled with gray managers, he is funny, refreshing, and successful. He saved a company that had been left for dead—and saved it in the halls of Congress and on TV, where everybody could see him. Iacocca may not be as good as most people think he is, but he *is* very good at two things: selling (both ideas and cars) and manipulating the federal government, getting it to do what he wants it to do. This latter skill, until recently, was rarely required of a top corporate manager. Now it's almost a necessity—certainly more important, in Iacocca's case, than being able to build good cars. Iacocca was a natural government influencer, partly because he was a natural salesman, with a flair for a good slogan.

His first success came in 1956 when, as assistant sales manager of Ford's District Marketing Office in Chester, Pennsylvania, he dreamed up "56 for 56," connoting that you could buy a '56 Ford for $56 a month. The Chester office went from thirty-second to first in sales that year, and Robert McNamara, then vice president of the Ford division, adopted the slogan nationwide. It boosted Iacocca's career, but it didn't prevent Ford's sales from falling 27 percent. Experts in the industry blamed the decline on McNamara's penchant for trying to get the public to buy Fords by emphasizing their safety features (deep-dish steering wheels, strong door locks, and rear-view mirrors that moved when you banged your head into them). The saying in Detroit in 1956 was: "McNamara's selling safety and Chevy's selling cars."

Iacocca learned his '56 lesson well, and his twenty-one-year career as a top Ford manager featured more flash than substance. He brought out jazzy new cars like the Maverick, Mark III, and Mustang. And many of them were cars that didn't work very well. In 1967 Ford recalled one-third of all the cars it built. And the Pinto had a gas tank with a propensity to explode, linking it to two dozen deaths, 60 multimillion-dollar civil suits, and 1.4 million recalls.

But in 1978 Iacocca was exactly what Chrysler needed, a salesman who could plead a desperate case to Washington and the public. Henry Ford II fired Iacocca as president on July 13 ("Let's just say I don't like you," Ford told Iacocca), and in November John Riccardo hired him as president of Chrysler with a promise that he would become chairman and chief executive officer the next year.

Chrysler is the smallest and least integrated of the Big Three American automakers. It doesn't have the purchasing clout of Ford and General Motors (GM owns many of its suppliers), and, since its cars are concentrated

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in the low-to-medium-priced end of the scale, Chrysler doesn't make large profits. In the auto business, the most profitable cars are the big ones, and, even though Chrysler came under attack in Congress for building gas-guzzling behemoths, its problem was just the opposite: It was strong at the bottom of the line, and thus more vulnerable to Japanese subcompacts and compacts than GM with its Oldsmobiles and Cadillacs and Ford with its LTDs and Cougars. Chrysler's size (it accounted for one-tenth of annual U.S. auto sales) presented another problem. The company was barely able to withstand the ups and downs of the business. Selling automobiles is cyclical; there are bad years and good, and the trick is to have enough financial resources to weather the bad ones. Chrysler was having a tough time because, during the good years, it wasn't making enough money to provide a cushion.

CHRYSLER ALSO was suffering the same malaise as the rest of the auto industry. Beginning in 1965, with the publication of Ralph Nader's polemic on the Corvair, *Unsafe at Any Speed*, automakers were being attacked for killing people on the highways, for making the air unfit to breathe, and for squandering scarce natural resources. The fun started going out of cars. Leon Mandel, in his book *American Cars*, wrote: "Sometime in the late sixties, the searchlights disappeared. Suddenly, almost without our knowing it, new-car introduction day was just another Monday or Thursday. There were no more soapy windows, no more hoopla." Where were the fins of yesteryear?

Then, when the Arab oil embargo hit in 1973, Detroit suffered a collective nervous breakdown. Automakers began turning out timid, self-conscious cars, ashamed to be on the road drinking precious fuel. These were cars that Detroit didn't want to build and America didn't want to buy. They were absurdly overpriced and poorly constructed. Americans turned to Japanese cars not merely because the Japanese were building smaller autos that saved on gas (actually the United States had been the pioneer in small cars, with Kaiser's Henry J in 1951) but also because the Japanese built *good* small cars. They were priced well; they were built well, with smooth surfaces and gleaming paint; and they worked.

And so, in the recession year of 1974, Chrysler lost $56 million; in 1975, $260 million. The next two years were profitable, but not profitable enough, and Riccardo realized that the future looked disastrous. To produce the cars it needed in the early 1980s, Chrysler had to invest huge sums in new plant and equipment, and the money wasn't there. Chrysler was already the most leveraged of the auto companies, and by 1977 it was becoming clear that it was approaching the limit of its debt load.

By the time Iacocca arrived, Riccardo had launched his own rescue operation. The plan was to lobby the Secretary of the Treasury, Michael Blumenthal, for tax breaks that would provide Chrysler with $1 billion in cash—to be paid back in future profitable years. Riccardo argued that the federal government owed Chrysler a bailout, that the company had gotten into trouble because of onerous regulations, like CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy), which required companies to increase the average miles per gallon of their fleets from 18 in 1978 to 27.5 by 1985 or face stiff penalties. CAFE meant that Chrysler would have to build a new generation of cars, and, unlike Ford and GM, it didn't have the money. Blumenthal was unmoved. Then Iacocca stepped in. He shifted the bailout effort to Congress, enlisted the support of Douglas Fraser of the United Autoworkers Union, and softened the argument: to bail out Chrysler would be to boost the economy, to save hundreds of thousands of jobs. If Chrysler failed, said Iacocca, the following plagues would descend on the land: the G.N.P. would fall 0.5 percent, the national unemployment rate would rise between 0.5 and 1.09 percent, the balance of trade would suffer a $1.5 billion shift on the deficit side. Welfare payments would amount to $1.5 billion, and the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation might have to shoulder $800 million in unfunded liabilities. Iacocca also argued—and still argues—that the loan guarantees he sought from the federal government were minuscule. He said recently: "We weren't the first; there were $409 billion in loans, guaranteed, before I even got to Washington to ask for my lousy billion-five guarantee." Those other loan guarantees, by the way, are made mostly by the Small Business Administration, the Farmers Home Loan Administration, and the Export-Import Bank.

"Here I was," said Iacocca, "a free enterpriser, coming hat in hand and asking for government involvement when I was against government involvement and regulation and so forth." He campaigned against safety regulations and against CAFE. But, like other modern followers of Adam Smith, he did not let ideology stand in his way. With help from Patton Boggs & Blow, Debevoise Plimpton, Booz-Allen & Hamilton, and Salomon Brothers, Iacocca finally got the money and saved the company. In 1982 Chrysler made a profit of $170 million—on the strength of selling its tank division to General Dynamics for $349 million. And last year, with sales up 30 percent, net income was $701 million. The company repaid its guaranteed loans seven years early and resumed dividends.

THE IMMEDIATE reason for Chrysler's survival was the government loan guarantees. The company simply would have run out of money if Congress had not approved the package in June of 1980. But even with the loans, Chrysler would not have survived without: (1.) the upturn in the economy in 1982, with the prime rate falling nearly by half to 11 percent from its 1980 peak, and (2.) measures to control expenses. Iacocca cut Chrysler factory employment in half. He closed one-third of the plants. He simplified production, reducing the number of parts and making new cars out of components of old cars. And he cut the break-even point from 2.3 million cars per year to 1.1 million.

In 1978 Lee Iacocca took over a company that was poorly managed and set it, at least temporarily, on a profitable course. But there's a parallel here: Philip Caldwell in 1979

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took over a company that was poorly managed and set *it* on a profitable course. The company that Caldwell took over, Ford, was poorly managed mostly by Lee Iacocca himself. "Whatever their accomplishments before or since, Henry Ford and Lee A. Iacocca, who was Ford's president from 1970 to 1978, presided over major strategic snafus, bad safety decisions and a serious decline in the quality of Ford cars while sketching an illegible blueprint for the 1980s," wrote Donald Woutat of the *Los Angeles Times*. "By the time Henry had fired Iacocca as president in 1978 and retired as chairman in 1979, the quality was so bad, a middle-level executive says, 'It was embarrassing to go to cocktail parties and tell people where you worked.' "

From 1979 to 1983 Caldwell did many of the same things that Iacocca did, but in most cases, he did them better. He cut the break-even point for domestic production from 3.6 million cars per year to 2.3 million, reduced white-collar employment by 30 percent, and closed six factories. The losses of Ford's North American division between 1980 and 1982 totaled $4.2 billion—far worse than Chrysler's. But in 1983, Ford made back nearly half of its losses, and its cash flow ($4.2 billion) was more than four times Chrysler's.

FORD HAD entered the dismal years flush with cash, and Caldwell didn't have to spend his time hustling Congress. While Iacocca was in Washington shaking hands and making his case, Caldwell was in Dearborn cutting costs and, just as important, preparing for the future. Ford is roughly three times the size of Chrysler, but between 1979 and 1982 Ford's capital investment totaled $11.4 billion, compared with Chrysler's $2.4 billion. And the investment is paying off in better cars. While Chrysler has been recycling its much-ballyhooed but technically mediocre K-cars, Ford has brought out new lines of aerodynamic beauties—the Thunderbird, Tempo, and Mark VII. The 1983 J.D. Power & Associates Customer Satisfaction Index ranked eight car divisions above average: six were Japanese, the other two were Lincoln-Mercury and Ford.

"If you can find a better car, buy it," was Iacocca's slogan during the glorious days of the turnaround. But that slogan was an act of bravado. Better cars were easy to find—and they still are. Most of them are Japanese. Iacocca's sales appeal was that Chrysler was the scrappy underdog; the chauvinistic bit worked, but it probably won't work forever. Chrysler has to start building good cars. Not just showy cars, like the LeBaron convertible or the new Plymouth and Dodge mini-vans (which will meet their match next year when both Ford and Chevrolet introduce sleeker versions) or the zippy Daytona and Laser sports cars, but solid compacts and subcompacts. Here, Iacocca has a serious problem. Half of his subcompacts—the Colt and Champ made for Chrysler in Japan by Mitsubishi since 1970—are superb. The other half—the Horizon and Omni, made in the U.S.A.—are not. And the K-cars are meeting stiff Japanese competition from the Mazda 626, the Toyota Camry, and the Honda Accord.

Just how poorly made are Chryslers? A reputable source is *Consumer Reports*, which in April listed ninety-two recommended used cars by price. None was an American-made Chrysler. Of the 1982 and 1983 American-made Chryslers rated by *Consumer Reports* for incidence of repair, four scored "average," nine "worse than average," and five "much worse than average." None was better than average. Compare those scores with Toyota: sixteen of seventeen models were "much better than average," the other "better than average." Ford had nineteen models scoring "average," one "much worse," and four "better than average."

BUT INSTEAD of putting time and effort into improving Chrysler products, Iacocca keeps returning to the scene of his success: politics. He is still the industrialist-as-Washington-insider, and he is now convinced that what Chrysler needs is quotas on Japanese cars, or continuation of the Voluntary Restraint Agreement (which was relaxed this year to allow about 1.8 million Japanese cars to be imported to the United States), or, best of all: "Let's slap a tax on every Japanese car sold in America equal to the tax loss we suffer on every car they now sell here." Iacocca claims that the reason Japanese cars sell so well in the U.S. is that they enjoy a $1,600 per car advantage—due to the yen being "undervalued by at least 15 percent"—and that the Japanese "rebate" a $700 domestic tax on cars that are exported. But the Japanese were building better and cheaper cars than Detroit long before the yen declined. And in the first quarter of this year alone Chrysler received tax breaks totaling $317 million. That's a "subsidy" of more than $600 for every car and truck Chrysler sold in those three months. A better explanation for the Japanese advantage of $1,500 to $2,000 per car can be found in the Commerce Department's report, *The U.S. Automobile Industry, 1982*. The edge, says the report, is "primarily due to management factors and lower wage rates." To compete, American automakers have to redesign their plants to build better cars "with less labor and less waste."

Iacocca also has been crusading against the joint venture between Toyota and General Motors, by which the Japanese Sprinter subcompact will be assembled in California. It's an odd complaint coming from the head of a company that sells 140,000 Japanese-built subcompacts and trucks a year, that uses Japanese and German parts and engines in many of its other cars, and that owns 15 percent of Mitsubishi Motors.

Chrysler still has a long way to go before it can survive another deep recession. The company lost $3.5 billion between 1978 and 1982 and has recovered only $1.6 billion through the first quarter of this year. The lesson that Lee Iacocca seems to have learned over the past five years is that industrial battles are won in Washington. Sadly, he's at least half right—and he'll be more right if some sort of "industrial policy" is instituted in the next few years. Then top corporate managers will be spending nearly all their time walking the halls of Congress instead of making their companies work better. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Italy, Little and Large

The Pope of Greenwich Village. Stuart Rosenberg is a submediocre director whose pictures, because of script or cast or both, occasionally triumph over his submediocrity. Examples: *Cool Hand Luke*, *Pocket Money*, and, to some extent, *Voyage of the Damned*. But when script and cast are poor, as they are here, Rosenberg makes them worse.

The Pope of Greenwich Village
(United Artists)

The Leopard
(Twentieth Century-Fox Classics)

This script, by Vincent Patrick from his own novel, is one of the dumbest in a long while—say, three months. The place is yet again Little Italy in New York (*Mean Streets* is only one of the obvious antecedents), the theme is yet again Italian male-bonding, especially within a family. In this dumb script, not one character is interesting, let alone engaging. Conventional sympathy is out of the question, but so is unconventional malevolent attraction, the Iago glitter. Both of the two principal males are repellent vermin, no more.

One of them, Charlie, is supposed to be a street-smart operator; the other, his cousin, Paulie, is supposed to be a dependent, appealing neurotic. (One more variation on *Of Mice and Men*.) We are then asked to believe that smart Charlie would get involved in a dangerous robbery on the assurance of Paulie and that an experienced old safecracker, Barney, would get into it on the word of either. At the end, after Paulie takes terrible revenge on a neighborhood boss whom he and Charlie fear, the cousins walk down the street blithely arm in arm, with no worry about reprisal. (And Rosenberg, to signal that the film is over, uses a master stroke of originality: he pulls the camera up and away.)

I could hardly understand a word that was spoken in the first ten minutes. Unfortunately the dialogue got clearer. The performance of Charlie by Mickey Rourke is a florid, failed attempt to make another Al Pacino out of the quiet loner in *Diner*. Daryl Hannah, his incredibly submissive girlfriend, was less fishy as the mermaid in *Splash*. Eric Roberts, the nutty cousin, gives us a thick slice of latter-day ham, technically inept; Geraldine Page, as a detective's mother, gives us a thick slice of Method ham, technically more resourceful. Only Kenneth McMillan as Barney is true. McMillan has done his share of belly acting in the past, letting his bulk work for him; here he has slimmed down and shaped up in two ways.

About one minute before the end, a line is included to justify the title. Nothing justifies the film.

The Leopard. For several months, a "new" version of this Visconti film—actually an earlier version—has been on view; so this note is belated. But the occasion is too important to overlook. When *The Leopard* was first shown here (TNR, September 14, 1963), it ran 161 minutes and was dubbed into English, except of course, for Burt Lancaster as Lampedusa's Prince, who spoke his own lines. Visconti's original film ran 205 minutes and, to my knowledge, has not been shown outside Italy. The current version is in Italian. It runs 185 minutes (the length that was first shown in France) and is thus 24 minutes longer than the 1963 release. Also twenty-one years have passed. All these facts make a difference.

The blessing of not hearing Lancaster's voice has to be experienced to be appreciated. The Italian voice makes Lancaster *look* different. (Lillian Gish became a lesser actress, in beauty as well as talent, with the advent of sound. I've seen James Cagney in Italy, dubbed into Italian, and he moved differently.) Nothing that Lancaster says now can undercut what we are supposed to believe about the Prince. Other actors in the cast are also dubbed—Alain Delon, surely, as the Prince's fiery nephew, but with a voice that does not belie what I know of him from French films. My long-standing argument against dubbing has always been against intervention—between one part of an actor's equipment and another. When that intervention is unobtrusive (as with Delon here or with Jeanne Moreau in *La Notte*), the argument doesn't apply. When the intervention actually helps, as in Lancaster's case, the argument is stilled.

The Leopard never lacked splendor for the eye, and the restored twenty-four minutes—a long time in a film—makes the splendor even more splendid. (I can't specify where the cuts have been restored.) As I recall, the 1963 version seemed to lack climaxes and theatricality because it was worrying about climaxes and theatricality. Now it is more at ease with its existence as a chronicle, as a development in line and depth rather than a drama. The long, gorgeous, socially freighted grand ball that concludes the film is now both the cinematic and thematic statement that Visconti intended.

Also, a film viewer's experience in the last twenty-one years helped this

FILMS WORTH SEEING

After the Rehearsal. A unique and absorbing meditation on theater and film by a master theater and film director, Ingmar Bergman. (Reviewed 6/25/84)

Another Country. Exceptionally well-made English film about the public school genesis of Burgess-McLean types. Script lacks a major synapse, but acting is first class. (7/9/84)

The Natural. Robert Redford uses Bernard Malamud's baseball novel as he pleases, but the results are mostly pleasant. (6/11/84)

Under the Volcano. Not much of Malcolm Lowry's texture but a lot of Albert Finney's and Jacqueline Bisset's extraordinary acting. Occasional glimpses of the interior hell where the novel resides. (6/18/84)

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new version. The latest and most relevant instance was Fassbinder's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, which I had seen shortly before I saw *The Leopard* again. Fassbinder's sixteen-hour work affected our expectations of motion and time, of dimension, expanded the receptivity of film to narrative-as-drama, rather than a narrative struggling to *be* drama. Thus Fassbinder's later film influenced Visconti's earlier one. Borges said that Kafka modifies and refines our reading of Hawthorne: "A great writer creates his precursors." Proportionately, that has also been the case with these two filmmakers.

Bergman Postscript. In the second of the three long scenes that compose *After the Rehearsal*, Ingrid Thulin and Erland Josephson converse frankly about sex, past and planned, while her 12-year-old daughter sits nearby. Only much later did I really become aware of the fact that, technically, the child is present; and then the effect was not distaste but admiration for another power of film. Bergman keeps his camera so close to the two adults that we forget the child is present: in any operative sense, the child is *not* present—except, at cooler moments, when Bergman reminds us of her with a glimpse, in order to fix the "pastness" of the dialogue between the adults. Oddly, when he includes a shot of the child, or gives us a long shot of all three persons, it seems a different, interwoven scene, not as if the child had been added to the previous intimate scene.

A filmmaker can of course remove a person at will without that person's actually leaving the scene. But that is not merely a fact of editing: it is an aspect of cinematic mystery, the way a scene becomes a *different* place according to what is included of the very same place. The theater can do this by means of lighting in nonrealistic plays; in fact, today's film-conditioned theater audiences cry out for the theater to do it at times. When I last saw *The Bacchae*, I pitied the actress playing Agave who had to lug Pentheus's head around the stage for the final twenty minutes or so while a lot of things went on. Film made me wish the director could have cut away from her until she was needed, to disembarrass us and her of her continuous presence with that fake head in her hand.

In *After the Rehearsal* Bergman uses that quasi-metaphysical asset of film in a work about a theater director that is set on a stage. This usage underscores the quality of Bergman's meditation here: on the faculties of both the theater and the film and his love of both.

Henry James on sexual warfare in America.

WHAT VERENA KNEW

BY JOSEPHINE HENDIN

NEARLY one hundred years after its publication, *The Bostonians* may still be ahead of its time. Its boldness of conception is only suggested in Henry James's notebook entry of April 18, 1883, where he declared his intention:

> I wished to write a very *American* tale, a tale very characteristic of our social conditions, and I asked myself what was the most salient and peculiar point in our social life. The answer was: the situation of women, the decline of the sentiment of sex, the agitation on their behalf.

More daring in actuality, the novel reversed the expectation, still commonly held, that the drama of feminism is the rescue of one woman by another from male oppression. James offered a more radical situation: a man who seeks to rescue a feminist speaker from the female mentor who has enabled her to make a fortune. Surprising in the 1880s, this scenario is still as fresh as current prophecies of a post-feminist culture in which successful female executives, at the peak of their careers, conclude they languish for babies. A film of James's very timely tale will appear this summer, adapted from the novel by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and directed by James Ivory.

Henry James had the foresight to find lasting social and sexual trends in the cultural upheaval that swept through America after the Civil War. As Irving Howe has said of the milieu of *The Bostonians*:

> In the mass industrial society that was coming into existence toward the end of the nineteenth century, the role of the sexes with regard to one another was no longer clear, the centers of authority and affection had become blurred, the continuity of family culture was threatened. . . . All that we have since associated with industrial society was moving into sight. . . .

Against such chaotic changes, James's Americans would struggle to create a sense of sexual order using the traditions that had guided them in the past. The progressive strain in our culture, optimistic in tone and egalitarian in outlook, would be embodied in the New England tradition of reform with its stress on individual worth and democratic values. Feminism was its sexual edge. The conservatism of Southern plantation culture—fatalistic in its emotions, aristocratic in manner, stressing a code of behavior based on personal honor and the chivalric code—would express its sexual faith in male supremacy. From such opposite poles, James constructed his drama of confrontation. In his brilliant portraits of Olive Chancellor, Boston bluestocking, and her protégée, Verena Tarrant, James would describe an intense friendship sealed by feminist activism. Against these reformers he would pit a handsome Southerner, Basil Ransom, who wants Verena for his own submissive wife. In a satiric replay of the Civil War on the battlefields of sex, James addressed politics as a crisis of sex, culture, and character.

In sexual warfare James found a metaphor for American differences; in American differences, he located a metaphor for sexual warfare. By focusing on the power plays within a passionate triangle, James avoided time-bound issues or programs of the moment to reveal the roots of reform or reaction in the social psychology of love and dominance. Infatuated with neither feminism nor male chauvinism, James wrote with a black humor as devastating in its wit as it is sharp in its critique of sexual politics. No writer in America had dared the subject before. No one has done it so well since.

Josephine Hendin teaches English at N.Y.U. This essay is adapted from a forthcoming new edition of *The Bostonians* (Bantam). A film of the novel will be released later this summer.

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But from the moment the first chapters were serialized in *The Century Magazine* between 1885 and 1886, it was clear that something was wrong. The work was greeted with silence and slights. William James, Henry's older brother, delivered the sharpest blow, writing to Henry that the book was a "bad business" because in it Henry had ridiculed the reformer and family friend Elizabeth Peabody in his character Miss Birdseye,

> whose charity began at home and ended nowhere . . . and who knew less about her fellow-creatures . . . after fifty years of humanitary zeal, than on the day she had gone into the field to testify against the iniquity of most arrangements.

"Shocked and appalled" by William's charge, Henry denied it and lashed back:

> The story is, I think, the best fiction I have written, and I expected you, if you said anything about it, would intimate that you thought as much—so that I find this charge on the subject of Miss Peabody a very cold douche indeed. . . .

To add injury to insult, Henry James's publisher went broke. In bankruptcy, he was unable to pay either the advance promised for *The Bostonians* or the fee for its serialization. Years later, long after James's mastery as a novelist had been established, ill luck would continue to pursue *The Bostonians*. Charles Scribner's Sons, publisher of the New York Edition of James's work, was not willing to include it, although it welcomed far lesser works. James believed the book had "never received any sort of justice." Shortly before his death in 1916, he said "I should have liked to review it for the Edition—it would have come out a much truer and more curious thing (it was meant to be curious from the first). . . . "

The Bostonians is still "curious." James found a vantage point on his ambitious subject in an authorial attitude as chilling as it was Olympian. He wrote, it seems to me, from a cold sexual suspicion, a skepticism expressed in both the structure and the meaning of the novel. His satire was shocking in its hard, ironic brilliance. It is not simply that he kept his distance from the social or sexual sufferings of his characters; he barricaded himself from them behind his sexual misgivings. His vision and his solutions to the aesthetic problems posed by his subject were so radical as to be more available to us than to his wary readers in 1886. *The Bostonians* stands between the tradition of realism, with its secure assumptions about sex and society, and the modern novel of paradox, which holds everything in doubt.

JAMES developed his unusual story in an almost classically romantic way. Olive Chancellor, a learned woman who "was a spinster as Shelley was a lyric poet, or as the month of August is sultry," and whose smile "might have been likened to a thin ray of moonlight resting upon the wall of a prison," has a pathological revulsion for men. Afflicted by a will to dominance and a will to martyrdom (she wishes to control a cause or die for it), she seems a neurotic, witchlike figure in possession of desirable Verena. Dark, handsome Basil, vibrating sexuality, looks every bit the fairy-tale hero come to rescue the captive maiden (whom he thinks of as a princess in distress). James sealed this drama in formal symmetry. In Part I, Olive wins Verena and shields her with her cloak from the eyes of several desirous, admiring men. In Part III, Basil triumphs and shields Verena with her cloak from the eyes of an audience waiting for a feminist speech. Such structural repetition suggests that James intended to create an equality of intent and force between the combatants and to justify Basil's cruelty toward Olive. In Olive's defeat and Basil's triumph there ought to be, if we follow the conventions of romance, joy at the restoration of sexual order. Yet James used romantic expectations to explode the most elemental notions of happiness and to attack the idea of romance.

James manipulated realistic portraits of people and places to disclose and protest against the very nature of expectation and belief. In his America, truth and hope are defined by the press and the magnetic figures it features. All language tends toward the distortions of persuasion and propaganda. James's Bostonians, crowding into their universal "humbler," the mass transit horsecar, live in a blighted landscape in which the buildings of a heroic past—the church steeple, the town hall—contend with factory smokestacks for visibility and rise from yards and streets "which gave a collective impression of boards and tin and frozen earth, sheds and rotting piles." In this setting, the norms of Puritanism and transcendentalism have each gone awry; the work of the abolitionists, having been completed, has faded. No code of manners or belief dense enough to cushion such losses, and no institutions to satisfy such spiritual longing, exist. The city of saints now seems to give way to charismatic speakers and a crude public opinion.

James envisioned this crisis of belief as a crisis of character. The men of New England bear the mark of twisted values. Selah Tarrant, Verena's father, is a mesmeric healer and holder of fake seances who looks like a smiling bat or "the priest of a religion that was passing through the stage of miracles." Showman and con man, his domestic morality is expressed in his virtually selling Verena to Olive. Public virtue is enforced by the likes of newsman Mathias Pardon who

> had begun his career, at the age of fourteen, by going the rounds of the hotels, to cull flowers from the big, greasy registers . . . and he might flatter himself that he had contributed in his measure, and on behalf of a vigilant public opinion, the pride of a democratic state, to the great end of preventing the American citizen from attempting clandestine journeys.

He wants to marry Verena, knowing she will make a fortune and believing that to link her gift of speech and his of promotion can ensure a successful partnership. The proposed alliance between tabloid and charismatic figure reflects James's sense of the directions American belief would take: it would produce profitable propaganda, ideas for mass titillation and consumption, and flourish on "spiritual" consumerism.

THE women of New England affect the purity of belief through perversities of emotion. The aged abolitionist Miss Birdseye "was heroic, she was sublime, the whole moral history of Boston was reflected in her displaced spectacles." Her skewed vision involves distortions of sentiment, for her charity is indiscriminate, and the price of her goodness is her ignorance of human nature. In his study of "one of those friendships between women that is so common in New England," James disclosed grosser subversions of belief through neurotic love. Olive's feminism is tainted by morbid exaltation at the thought of female suffering and by the effort of sublimating all desire to ideology. Her devouring possessiveness and fear of losing Verena lead her to wreck the remnants of morality in Verena's family by paying off Selah, and to con-

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ceal from Verena an offer of marriage and support for her career that would save her from Basil. Her betrayal of Verena, her need not to see anything between a man and a woman succeed, are moral as well as psychological blights on her friendship and her feminism. The spiritual child of Miss Birdseye is Verena, who shares her inability to see in either Olive or Basil elements of malice. In such excesses of sympathy and in Olive's excesses of jealousy lie derangements of both sentiment and belief.

James lures the reader toward his critique of Bostonians with the possibility that Basil's elitism and conservatism offer solutions. Much confusion over the meaning of the novel has come from too easy an assumption that James's polarization of positions meant that one was "right" and the other, "wrong." As Leon Edel puts it: "The reader is made to believe to some degree that in the struggle between Olive and Basil, he is watching a struggle between good and evil." Those who succumb to partisanship invariably become Basil's supporters. William James: "The *fancy* is more tickled by R.'s victory being complete." Louise Bogan: "Of first-rate intelligence, completely 'unreconstructed,' holding 'unprogressive' ideals of manliness, courage and chivalry, Basil Ransom has a civilized set of principles to fall back upon." But such views do not withstand close reading of a novel in which good and evil constantly shift, Basil's victory is diminished by its joylessness, and Basil is far from chivalrous.

THAT JAMES was critical of conservatism is made entirely clear in his treatment of Basil's character and the Southern culture it reflects. Focusing on the paradox of a Southern character—its surface amiability and charm, its hidden ruthlessness—James's treatment calls to mind that Southern catchphrase, "Save face and you save all." In his descriptions of Basil's good looks and his suppression of Basil's cruelties, James represented the distortions of masculinity contained in such an ethic. Southern languor, leisure, and chivalry are belied as features of moral worth by Basil's passive attitude toward the near starvation of his mother and sister who subsist in Mississippi on a "farinaceous diet." Basil's chivalry is, as James says, "moral tinsel," a form of concealment. As Basil says of Verena as he resolves to squelch her plans: "He really pitied her for not perceiving, beneath his ominous pleasantries, the firmness of his resolution." If the New Englander grows strident and corrupt in proselytizing his or her belief, the Southerner grows silky in concealing his purpose. If the power plays of the North involve con games or puritanic forms of feminism, those of the South are marked by masquerades and seductions.

BASIL'S suavity suggests the failure of the postwar South to replace or revive its lost culture. Having failed in the practice of law because his efforts are "lax," Basil dreams of controlling national conduct and longs "to act upon the public opinion of the time." James both grants and ridicules his intellectual ambition. More devastatingly, he lets us *see* Basil's thought processes. In a woman's luxurious parlor, Basil thinks of marrying the woman whom he dislikes but who can keep him in comfort while he fulfills his wish to influence the nation. "Was it not one's duty to put oneself in the best conditions? . . . He almost persuaded himself that the moral law commanded him to marry." The willingness to sell himself for comfort and time reflect the emasculation of a heritage of leisure out of helpless nostalgia for the past. Anxiety over his own masculinity is contained in the fervor of his male chauvinistic polemic, his tying his intelligence to bolstering manhood, his tacit acceptance, after having failed in the usual outlets for male success, that he will define himself by fighting one woman and seducing another. If the propagandists of New England delude others, Basil goes further in using the language of persuasion to entice women and deceive himself. That he sees publishing one reactionary article in "The Rational Review," as a sign that he can support a wife and family, as well as his mother and sister, suggests his delusion that he can play a male role without effort.

The greatest seduction in the novel may be James's seduction of his readers into believing that the conceptions of the past, be they Southern or Northern, hold solutions for the present and future. Readers are lured into the deceptions and self-deceptions of the characters, into sharing the hopes of a feminist ideology which promises freedom, or of a conservatism that holds the promise of security through male power. Such expectations, not fulfilled in the novel, only plunge the reader from illusions of hope to the experience of impasse.

James's essential concern is the quality of emotion in a culture in which sexual ideology offers no effective way of coping with the deeper anxieties of human entanglements. The heart of his meaning is revealed in the characters who bear the burden of heterosexual desire: Verena and Basil. Each is a product of social forces sweeping through America. North and South encounter each other in the young woman on the rise and the man with nowhere to go; in the self-made girl and the man unmade by war. The drama of New England optimism is contained in Verena's Emersonian spirit; the tragedy of a lost war is contained in Basil's perversion of conservatism to reactionary bitterness. From Olive's puritanism, Verena has absorbed a work ethic that makes her studious in her efforts to improve her skills. Aristocratic incapacity for labor has forced Basil's failure at law. In her ignorance of the dark side of human nature, in an idealism that leaves her disarmed and disabled before Basil, Verena reveals excesses and dangers of Emersonianism. In his ability to be com-

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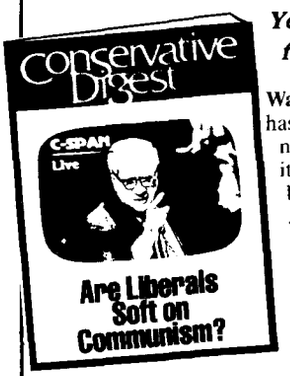

You determine for yourself

Walter Mondale has said, "I cannot understand it . . . it just baffles me . . . why the Soviets the last few years have behaved as they have."

Gary Hart has said, "*Cuba is not totalitarian.*"

Liberal Congressman **Ted Weiss** has said, "*There is no way of distinguishing what we are doing in Grenada and what the Soviets are doing in Afghanistan.*"

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passionate or even generous to Verena, Basil reflects the distortions of masculine authority aggravated by plantation culture. Brought up in lecture halls to every shifting new faith, endowed with self-disposable parents, Verena has known one kind of modern uprootedness. Brought up to wealth, power, and dominance only to lose all, Basil has experienced the dislocations of history and circumstance. Each seems pitifully alone.

Of all the characters in *The Bostonians*, Verena has been the least understood or appreciated. She has been accused of not having an idea "in her pretty little head," of simply not being "interesting enough," of being "gaudy," or of having options which are equally trivial: "At best she will be a kind of oratorical actress; and the alternative is that of becoming a submissive wife." Critics have generally misperceived her as only an article fought over by the more interesting Basil and Olive. Yet it must be granted that Verena is crucial to the novel, not simply as a prize but as a measure of the quality of feeling in the encounter of love with power.

VERENA is a changeling in the style of such American misfits as Pearl in *The Scarlet Letter*, who is radiant with life in a life-denying culture, or the heroic Billy Budd, whose physical and moral beauty are ironically unsupportable in his environment. Verena retains a thirst for experience amid characters who have fled from it into fear and nostalgia. Often critical of Olive's views and never believing in Basil's, she has a far more independent mind than she has been accorded and is capable of understanding in human rather than merely political terms. Her great potential for emotional strength is revealed in the fullness of her compassion for Olive and Basil, her natural self-esteem, expressed in her freedom from shame before her audiences and derived from her sense of innate goodness, but above all in her magical "gift" for speech, for connection. Through Verena, James measures the effects of love on the only character capable of feeling it. The only one who changes in the course of the novel, Verena undergoes a metamorphosis from the triumphant woman she is at the beginning of Part II to the confused and weeping outcast from family, friends, and belief she becomes at the end.

James's exploration of the social psychology of desire is split between a portrait of the effects of love (Verena's decline), and a study of the nature of desire (what Basil wants), and the mechanisms of seduction (how Basil gets what he wants). With Machiavellian precision, James probes the stages and meaning of Basil's passion. Basil's desire has two edges: the first is a covetousness of Verena's gift for being heard that reveals his love as a desire to appropriate and confer upon himself her talent for being accepted. The second is a craving to control Verena's gift, to focus it on himself by insisting she charm only him. Achievement of the former "creates" his power and relieves his anxiety over failure. Fulfillment of the latter reassures his "authority" and alleviates his loss of influence. Each is a form of self-aggrandizement devoted to retrieving himself from smallness and frustration.

Basil's efforts to steal or control Verena's magic are charted by James in three key scenes, each of which is characterized by an American landmark. Near Memorial Hall, built in honor of Harvard's Civil War casualties, Basil leads a strategic assault on Verena's New England conscience by persuading her to lie to Olive. "Conscious of a man's brutality," he coerces her by banter, nastiness, and prospects of his conversion to feminism. The lie arouses both her guilt and her efforts to make good on it by "reforming" him. In New York's Central Park, Basil plays serpent in the urban Eden, luring her on with the possibility of his reform, only to intensify her guilt, confuse her with his mixture of reason and rationalization, and indulge in what is now, somewhat excessively, called mind-rape: telling her he knows better than she does what she thinks and feels.

JAMES is never more devastating than in revealing an amatory style indistinguishable from anger. Basil declares he wishes to save masculine character from feminization and doesn't much care "what becomes of you ladies while I make the attempt!" Thinking of kissing and embracing her on a sheltered park bench, "he kept expressing monstrous opinions with exotic cadences, and mild, familiar laughs, which, as he leaned toward her, almost tickled her cheek and ear" as if they were sweet remarks.

> It seemed to her strangely harsh, almost cruel, to have brought her out only to say to her things which . . . could only give her pain; yet there was a spell upon her as she listened. . . . Ransom's will had the effect of making her linger.

Ransom's "method" is to render Verena vulnerable by confusing her with sexual signals that are alternately seductive and antagonistic. He breaks down her confidence in her beliefs and in her self-esteem (the more she listens, the more it slips) and invites and then repels with laughter all her attempts at self-defense, a practice that mars her faith in her gift for connection. His "spell" is the fruit of his labor: he reduces Verena to confusion, silence, and shame. His satanic effect is to make her, for the first time in her life, ashamed to be looked upon. But this is far from the greatest sign of her fall. Ironically, after having reduced her to silence in the park, Basil has his first success at publication. She, on the other hand, is never again shown successfuly speaking before an audience.

WITH clinical exactitude James probes the paradox of a woman's decline through love. Part III charts Verena's loss of status, loss of self, and loss of pleasure as she is asked "to burn everything she had adored; she was to adore everything she had burned." She incorrectly attributes her misery to the effort of detaching herself from Olive or even from the life of a feminist speaker, but Basil correctly realizes it is the price she will pay for being with him. Her sexual excitement in his presence and her confusion make her yield to his power over her gift for speech, for sexual joy, for connection, and for life. That all these are one is suggested in James's sexualized imagery:

> She felt it must be magical touch that could bring about such a cataclysm. Why Basil had been deputed by fate to exercise this spell was more than she could say—poor Verena, who up to so lately had flattered herself that she had a wizard's wand in her own pocket.

Basil's way of love involves a theft not simply of Verena's heart, but of her capacity to feel joy. In one of the bitterest ironies, James associates yielding her gifts not with pleasure but with impotence. To regain her power of connection, of intense self-expression, she will have to ransom it from Basil. Yet her power to persuade has been appropriated by him. Leading his final raid into the Boston Conservatory of Music, a fortress of Boston culture, Basil strikes

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Verena totally mute simply by being in the audience where thousands wait to hear her. As she begs for his permission to speak before leaving with him "forever," there are

> sobs and supplications in her voice, and Ransom felt himself flushing with pure pity for her pain. . . . But at the same moment he had another perception which brushed aside remorse; he saw that he could do what he wanted, that she begged him, with all her being, to spare her, but that so long as he should protest, she was submissive, helpless.

As he presses his advantage to its humiliating conclusion, failure and success change places as she weeps and he triumphs. James salts Verena's tears with his prediction: "It is to be feared that with the union, so far from brilliant, into which she was about to enter, these were not the last she was destined to shed." As Verena's passion costs her her capacity for pleasure, so Basil achieves his desire by destroying everything in Verena that charmed him. In this marriage, possibilities of love are foreclosed.

The Bostonians offers a vision of people trapped in a sexual paradox. The ideologies to which Olive, Verena, and Basil look for sexual clarity and hope ironically nourish seeds of betrayal and self-betrayal. Their feminism and male chauvinism provide oversimplifications of sexual roles that run the danger of inflaming sexual anxiety and fanning sexual competitiveness. Neither ideology can address complexities of intimacy. Each is marked by a rapacity that makes winning Verena more important than enjoying her and possessing her more important than knowing her. Her dehumanization by Basil and Olive conveys James's fear that in the culture he saw as merely exploitative, the fate of love is to be twisted to a crude utility. Desire in this novel takes that form of need utterly shaped by acquisitiveness: parasitism. In their lack of redeeming humanity, Olive and Basil cannot be said to stand as representative Americans, but only as representatives of American excess.

In the harsh satire of *The Bostonians*, Henry James offered a brilliant diagnosis of sexual disorder in American bodies politic. He wrote no prescriptions; he saw no easy cures. He showed no solutions in reform or reaction, or in any movement of the time that disclosed unvarnished yearning for power. America and Americans would have to find solutions that did not yet exist. Henry James solved *his* American problem by turning to Europe and to England for settings and subjects. There he would describe in the great novels that came after *The Bostonians* relations between the sexes that were no more generous than ours. And yet they were graced by richer ways of accommodating and relieving rapacity.

WATERGATE UNDER THE BRIDGE

Exile: The Unquiet Oblivion of Richard M. Nixon by Robert Sam Anson

(Simon & Schuster, 360 pp., $17.95)

Richard Nixon is wont to say that he is the only citizen of the United States over the age of 35 who is ineligible to run for President. But if the No Third Term Amendment did not apply, a lot of people, including some old liberals, would be thinking about running the swoop-nosed one against Ronald Reagan as a reform candidate. Thus has the American Warwick shed his hump and emerged from the odium of ten years to claim a peculiar but no longer despised place in the national public life.

The story of the hump shedding is told interestingly enough in Robert Sam Anson's gossipy, inconsequential book. Unfortunately his is not the book we need, either about the man, his politics, or his Administration. A shame, too, for Anson—a card-carrying liberal Nixon hater who obviously has come to have an affection, even an admiration, for the slyest President since Martin Van Buren—is fair-minded enough to have brought off a balanced work, a work that might have attacked the important questions about Nixon and our political system.

Rather than applying himself to the labors of serious biography, he has produced a book which might have been written by the Hollywood lady with the lisp and the preposterous pretensions who appears on your television screen when your hand slips and you click onto ABC. Surely we can do without a day-by-day narrative of the course and treatment of Nixon's phlebitis, his relations (innocent and inconsequential) with Diane Sawyer, and the large number of rich, important people with whom he lunches and exchanges pleasantries. To make it long instead of good, the book is padded with extracts of verbatim tape transcripts and old television interview shows.

ANSON treats us to yet one more go-around on such fresh topics as Rose Mary Woods and the gap and why he didn't destroy the tapes. But try as he will, Richard Nixon can never answer the question in a way that will satisfy his interlocutors. The Milhous, by his own description and his enemies', is a mean, realistic, "hardballing" son of a bitch pol who did not need his old Secretary of the Treasury, John Connally, to tell him he should have taken those spools of iron filings and burned them on the White House lawn.

From time to time Nixon has more or less said he didn't deep-six the tapes because he didn't think they were incriminating; he considered them, in fact, exculpatory. He was going to use them, for instance, to see that John Dean didn't tell lies about him. Regardless, then, of what others came to think of him, Nixon, as he once said at a press conference, didn't consider himself a crook then or later; this book has him asking a visitor to San Clemente after the fall, "Tell me—what did I do wrong?" And well he might ask.

He could not figure out what he had done which was so uniquely wrong, much less criminal. Anson paraphrases Nixon saying,

> Other Presidents had done the same as he, or worse—done it and gotten away with it, because they weren't Nixon. Take Lyndon Johnson, Nixon went on, rubbing his hands together. "Now there was an astonishing creature, a piece of work." The taping system Johnson had installed in the Oval Office made his own seem like junk. And the things Johnson said—"People said my language was bad, but

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Jesus, you should have heard LBJ!" Yes, Johnson was something. The shenanigans with Bobby Baker, the way he played Hoover and the F.B.I., the financial and political skullduggery, the whole slick business—talk about cover-ups; there was the champ.

For his break-ins and his burglaries Nixon relied on a doctrine of inherent Presidential powers. The term is not his; it is Abraham Lincoln's. No occupant of the White House has used those powers with a wider and more brutal sweep than Lincoln did. He made an army, and spent millions in unappropriated money to pay for an undeclared war while throwing anyone in jail who seemed to have the power and intention to thwart his policies. Nixon's enemies list, his rather minor telephone taping, are peccadillos, mere offenses against manners and taste, in contrast to the beating the Bill of Rights sustained under Honest Abe. Yet Lincoln did more than get away with it; he was supported and encouraged by Congress when, months after Lincoln's faits accomplis, it returned to Washington in July of 1861 to ratify and make legal every scandalously illegal act the President had committed. No blanket pardon needed there.

THE DIFFERENCE, of course, was the political basis upon which these two wartime Presidents acted. Both men were, like Woodrow Wilson in 1917, confronted with significant hostility to their war policies. During the Civil War, however, though portions of the dominant circles in the North were miserable about the length and cost of conflict, they did not go into complete open opposition. Lincoln was backed up by the part of the Union over which he was still President. He did not have to contend with Nixon's predicament—fighting a war which had split the nation's ruling circles. That is why Nixon, whose civil liberties record is fairly temperate compared to other wartime Presidents, seems so odiously oppressive.

Next to Lincoln, the wartime President with the foulest civil liberties record is Woodrow Wilson, who smashed anyone who used political action to oppose American participation in the War to End War. Men and women in large numbers were jailed for writing and speaking against the war; newspapers and magazines were closed; J. Edgar Hoover was brought over from the Library of Congress to the Justice Department to amass what grew to be a file of 200,000 political dossiers on people and organizations. To catch "shirkers," as World War I draft resisters were called, three- or four-block areas in the business sections of major cities would be sealed off by soldiers and federal authorities; within the dragnet all males not wearing service uniforms would be stopped and those unable to come up with a convincing excuse would be arrested on the spot.

THESE and other large-scale violations of the Bill of Rights by the Wilson Administration, both during and after the war, called the American Civil Liberties Union into existence. Still, the government had a problem. Wisely or not, the government had entered a war that was opposed by large elements in the population: the German-speaking groups, naturally, but also the Irish, a large and well-organized Socialist Party, as well as significant groupings of farmers and neo-Populists in the South and the Southwest. Not until Johnson and Nixon would a wartime President have to face down such opposition.

Wilson had an advantage, though. While men like Senator James K. Vardaman and Claude Kitchen, the House Majority leader, opposed the war, the most intense opposition to it came from the margins of society—immigrants, small farmers, or pariah radical groups. The Republicans were pro-war, as were the Eastern banking interests. The power centers were in enthusiastic favor of going Over There. Thus Wilson could use force to silence the other side and expect to be backed up as he was, even by some jurists like Oliver Wendell Holmes, who had reputations as civil libertarians.

Nixon's position was more precarious. He could never be sure who would back him up when he took a swat at the antiwar obstructionists. In 1942 a pliant judiciary had sanctioned the stealing of Japanese property in California and the locking up of its owners under the pretext of military necessity; in the 1970s the Nixon Administration found it increasingly hard to find a judge who would even enforce the riot act against maddened mobs of collegians who would descend on the capital city to give the national government a hazing every few months. The sons and daughters of wealthy and powerful people were in those mobs of middle-class offspring—they could not have the same rough hand put to their posteriors as Wilson put to the insurrectionary sharecroppers of Oklahoma in 1917.

Nixon, either out of caution or a lack of power to smite his opponents as he would have liked, hit back with a spasmodic lack of deliberation. Sometimes there would be an indictment and sometimes there would not. In any case the convictions came slowly, if at all, and always at great cost in goodwill and support. The extra-legal activities, the burglaries and such, were more acts of angry eccentricity than part of a policy calculated to intimidate and overawe.

The pattern of actions shows that Nixon and his people did not see or could not accept the political situation which was emasculating them. Certainly they did not understand that the doctrine of inherent Presidential power is only as reliable as a President and his policies are popular. They did not draw the right conclusions when people like J. Edgar Hoover, political weathermen every bit as adept as the radicals they faced, began creeping away from them. The White House plumbers came into existence because the F.B.I. and the C.I.A., ordinarily happy enough to perform dirty tricks for Presidents, were inching away and failing to come through. The instruments of political repression were not available, yet Nixon pressed on.

MEANWHILE the summer soldiers of the Vietnam War were changing position. That happened to Lincoln in the months before the 1864 election, which he thought he was going to lose even though he furloughed half the Union Army to go back home and vote for him. The cost in lives and the cruelly interminable length of the war was more than many could suffer for attaining one nation indivisible. Lincoln, though, was rescued by Sherman's capture of Atlanta, with its promise of the Confederacy's early death. Nixon's generals gave him no victory with which to shore up his policy. After the 1972 election, when that dangerous crackpot (as George McGovern was viewed by the American establishment) was dispensed with by the electorate, the way was open to distance himself from responsibility for a war which had been going on almost as long as the Siege of Troy.

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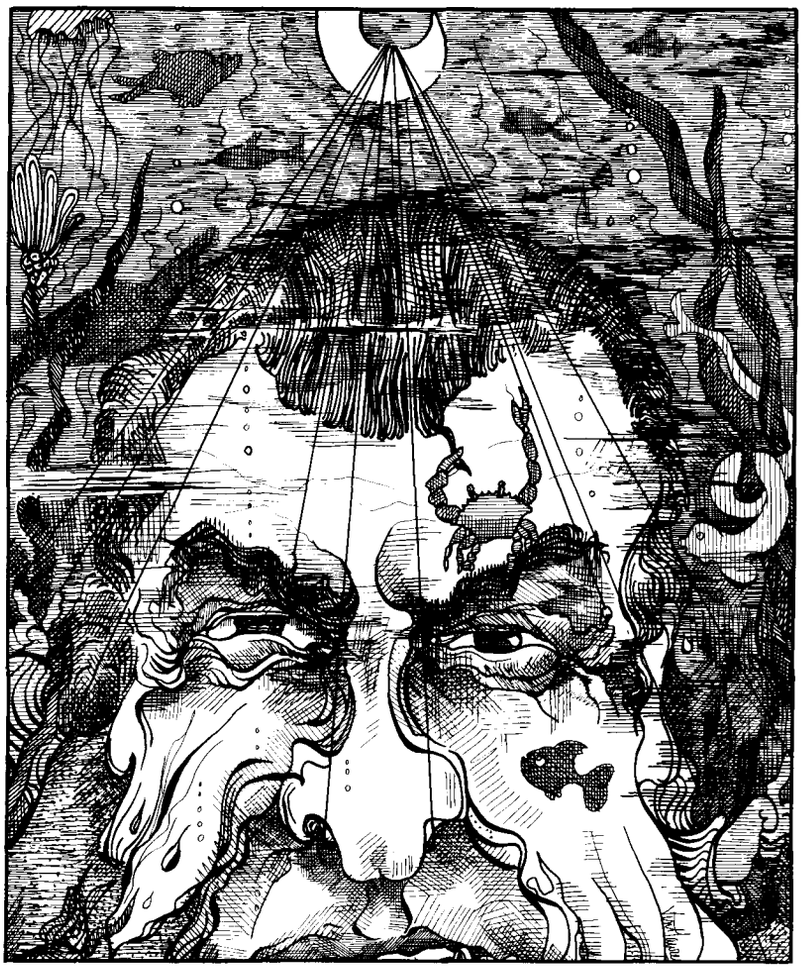
If and when the day comes that Nixon is studied by a dispassionate biographer, one of the aspects of his fall which will strike the chronicler is the psychology of some of those who brought him down. Granted that, like Andrew Johnson in the last year and a half of his tenure, Nixon unfailingly said the words and did the things most likely to nettle and enrage. Still, those who did him in were transferring the weight of their own transgressions on to him. Two members of the Senate and none in the House voted against the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, the document giving Congressional sanction to waging the war. *Time*, CBS, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*—all the organs of sophisticated, tepidly liberal opinion—put themselves in favor of the war, as did academia and the krill suspended in the fetid waters of the foreign policy think tanks. Yet in the end they called him the Imperial President; said it was his stinking war, not theirs; and drove him out of town with a bitterness bereft of all proportion or sense of history.

They spared the man no accusations in public if they thought they could get away with them, or in private if they weren't sure—alcoholism, homosexuality with Bebe Rebozo, psychotic power lust, even the uttering of indelicate language in the Oval Office (surely the strangest of accusations against anyone succeeding to the Presidency immediately after Lyndon Johnson). The consciousness of who they were, of the things they themselves had done, disappeared from the minds of the men and the women in the highly placed mob stoning Nixon. Editors and politicians who had said nothing when the F.B.I. itself had told them it was electronically recording the extramarital sex life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. became indignant civil libertarians for a season.

So hot did the anger burn that it took years for some to cool off. Anson quotes David Broder of *The Washington Post*, a man who weighs his words nigh on to somnabulance, discussing ex-President Nixon's sojourn in China in the words of a Bug House Square soap box opera: "The utter shamelessness of the man—his willingness to exploit and corrupt every institution and relationship of which he has ever been part—has become so blatant that one would think that it would not require comment. But Nixon goes blithely on his way, demonstrating again in his incredible journey to Peking that there is nothing, absolutely nothing, he will not do in order to salvage for himself whatever scrap of significance he can find in the shambles of his life."



RICHARD NIXON BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

At some point in the train of events leading to the defenestration of Richard Nixon, a hysterical contagion took command of the emotions of the leading people, official and otherwise, inthe governance of the United States. You could pick up your newspaper any morning in those months and read quotes about a sitting President from politicians or opinionators which had heretofore been reserved for rather unpleasant foreigners like Adolph Hitler or Joseph Stalin. Presidential politics in the normal humdrum sense had stopped; what had taken over was something which remains to be studied by historians specializing in social psychology and crowd behavior.

Many Presidents and political controversialists have had to endure being pelted by rotten eggs. What makes the Nixon necktie party so disturbing, even now, was the unanimity of the voices. For a time debate ceased, as America went through what might be called our version of the Cultural Revolution. Perhaps, given the quasi-monarchical symbolism attaching to the office since Washington's time, a national communal fury has to be stoked up in order for us to get rid of a President who has become politically unendurable; maybe this degrading and frightening auto-da-fé is the only mechanism possible in a system which cannot bring a government down by a vote of no confidence, as in the House of Commons. (Regardless of how gifted a devil one may regard Richard Nixon, the man couldn't have had the *time* to do half the things he was eventually accused of.) Nevertheless, an American democracy which takes such an important step as the expulsion of its President through a process in which politicians and press unanimously act the part of the Eumenides, is a democracy running away with itself. Moreover, now, ten years later, we are as oblivious of this breakdown as we were when we were going through it.

When Jerry Ford assumed office the Lincolnian phrase about binding up the nation's wounds got dusted off and there was much talk about America as a

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riven society. There was not much evidence of these fissures. The politicians, the journalists, the cosmopolitan business people, the academics on the Washington shuttle, the 200,000 who do the day-to-day running of America, did certainly feel ripped up and bruised, not unlike a grand mal epilepsy victim might feel after an especially bad attack; but the masses of our people seemed dispassionate about what was going on. They enjoyed the Watergate hearings as superior TV drama. When they found out Nixon cheated on his taxes as they would if they could, they marked him down as another smarmy politician. But in the main they were voyeurs from afar, watching him with what may have been stoicism or may have been indifference. Like the strike of the major league baseball players a few years later, the underlying reaction seems to have been, "Well, who would have ever thought! They never did *that* before."

Since the last flight of Air Force One to San Clemente Richard Nixon has sometimes been credited with making the China policy, although Henry Kissinger does like to horn in on the bows. In general, though, the policies and intentions of the Nixon Administration are a repudiated ruin. Détente, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, the networks of trade and communication, are all gone—but so is the domestic program of this unlikable man who may, come a generation of historians with some perspective, be marked down as nothing less than the last liberal in the White House.

If he does become the last New Dealer, it will be for more than daring to attack inflation through price controls. Among the books we're waiting for is the one which puts together the Nixon Administration's role in environmental, consumer, health, and welfare legislation. (Not many remember the Nixon-Moynihan Family Assistance Plan, that pioneer attempt to make welfare work before some hardhearted Hannah rode out of the west to destroy it.) If Ronald Reagan has cut down the safety net, much of that net was spun in the Nixon years. The Reagan Administration intends to undo government. Nixon did not. He wanted to make it work better, and to that end attempted a major reorganization of the federal government along lines contemplated by Franklin Roosevelt.

Of late a somewhat mellow Nixon has been appearing on our TV screens. It would be too much to say that the old boy is displaying the first symptoms of senior citizen charm. He is his grotty old self, too sneaky, too obviously self-serving, too much the kitsch personality. But he is not an evil imp, not a malevolent creature from the wrong side of the space warp. Rehabilitating this man, however, who is a major figure in this century, will be about as helpful to us as villifying him has been. Robert Sam Anson's bubble-weight chatsy-watsy volume does neither. Somewhere there must be a writer of Robert Caro's ability to do with Richard Nixon what Caro is doing with Lyndon Johnson.

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

Nicholas von Hoffman, a TNR contributing editor, is the author of a novel, *Organized Crimes*, to be published by Harper & Row this fall.

THE TET DEFENSIVE

A Matter of Honor
by Don Kowet

(Macmillan, 317 pp., $16.95)

On January 22, 1982, CBS News took full-page ads in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. The ads showed a group of men huddling around a table on which was etched the word "Conspiracy." The accompanying text read:

> CBS Reports reveals the shocking decisions made at the highest level of military intelligence to suppress and alter critical information on the number and placement of enemy troops in Vietnam. A deliberate plot to fool the American public, the Congress, and perhaps even the White House into believing we were winning a war that in fact we were losing. Who lied to us? Why did they do it? What did they hope to gain? How did they succeed so long? And what were the tragic consequences of their deception? Tomorrow night the incredible answer to these questions. At last.

The "incredible answer" was supplied the next night on a ninety-minute documentary, "The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception." Mike Wallace, the program's chief correspondent, said at the outset: "we have come to believe [there] was a conscious effort—indeed a conspiracy at the highest levels of American military intelligence—to suppress and alter critical intelligence on the enemy in the year leading up to the Tet offensive." As a result, said Wallace, the offensive "caught the American public totally by surprise. But more important than that, it caught the mighty American army, half a million strong, unprepared for the enemy's bold strikes in all of South Vietnam's cities." The "tragic consequences" of this unpreparedness were spelled out a few minutes later by Wallace in the course of asking a question. If "American troops are going to have to face a much larger enemy than they're being told . . . a lot of them are going to get slaughtered," he said. And who was responsible for this? A "conspiracy" necessarily involves more than one party, but CBS's chief culprit was the commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, General William Westmoreland.

Three days after the broadcast, Westmoreland convened an angry press conference in Washington. He was joined by Lieutenant General Daniel Graham, a former military intelligence officer in Vietnam, who had been identified in CBS's broadcast as the other principal culprit in the Westmoreland conspiracy, and by four other speakers who had played no part in the broadcast. That very omission went to the heart of their indictment of CBS. One of the four was George Carver, the top C.I.A. official dealing with Vietnam war intelligence. Two others were General Philip Davidson and Colonel Charles Morris, the two top military intelligence officials in Vietnam during the period on which the broadcast focused. Any conspiracy of the type postulated by CBS would necessarily have involved Carver, Davidson, and Morris. It was subordinates of these three who had appeared before CBS cameras testifying that their estimates of enemy forces had been rejected or distorted, presumably at the

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behest of Westmoreland. But all of the intelligence estimates that were in question—both the "honest" ones that were allegedly rejected, and the "cooked" ones that were allegedly used instead—were passed up or down between Westmoreland and these witnesses through the hands of Carver, Davidson, and Morris.

THE OTHER speaker at Westmoreland's press conference was the former ambassador to Vietnam, Ellsworth Bunker, the chief liaison between Westmoreland and the White House. If Westmoreland and the others were conspiring to mislead the White House, their principal target had to have been Bunker. Bunker denied that he had been the victim of any such conspiracy, just as Carver, Davidson, and Morris denied having participated in one. Bunker could conceivably be deluded, just as the other three could be lying. The essential question, however, was why CBS had not allowed the four to appear on the program to answer or discuss the accusations.

Following the Westmoreland press conference, other key figures who would have been affected by the "conspiracy" came forth to deny CBS's premise. Walt Rostow, who had been special assistant to President Johnson, wrote that Johnson was fully aware of the dissenting views within the intelligence branches over the estimates of enemy strength, and that Johnson himself "read voraciously" in the raw source material from which all of the contending estimates were derived. Rostow said he had explained this to CBS during a three-hour-long taped interview which the network had chosen not to use at all in its broadcast.

This testimony by former officials had little discernible impact on CBS, but the network's reaction was different a couple of months later when a *TV Guide* cover story, titled "Anatomy of a Smear," took the CBS documentary apart. *TV Guide*'s authors, Don Kowet and Sally Bedell, concluded that " 'The Uncounted Enemy' was often arbitrary and unfair," that it was guilty of "inaccuracies, distortions and violations of journalistic standards." CBS News President Van Gordon Sauter announced that CBS would conduct an internal inquiry into the *TV Guide* accusations. He named Burton Benjamin, CBS News's senior executive producer, to conduct it.

A few months later, Benjamin's 59-page report was completed but not released. Instead Sauter released a brief memo of his own announcing the conclusions of the investigation: that CBS stood by "the substance of the broadcast" but conceded that "it would have been better" if several things had been done differently in preparing it. Sauter also said that the use of the word "conspiracy" had been inappropriate—a confusing concession on his part, because the charge of conspiracy was right at the heart of the broadcast's "substance."

The cry of "cover up" by CBS's critics did not budge Sauter from his position that the "Benjamin report" was privileged and would not be made public. But a court ruling did. A headstrong Westmoreland, ignoring much friendly advice, brought a $120 million lawsuit against CBS for libel. In the discovery proceedings, the judge ordered release of the Benjamin report. It was tougher on CBS than Sauter's memo had suggested. It confirmed most, though not all, of *TV Guide*'s specific charges. Most important, it contradicted, albeit somewhat elliptically, CBS's defense of the premise of the broadcast. Benjamin said: "even today military historians cannot tell you whether or not MAC-V [Military Assistance Command, Vietnam] 'cooked the books' as the broadcast states. The flow of definitive information is painfully slow and may never be conclusive."

Westmoreland's suit has now reached the stage of litigation, putting the whole controversy back in the news, and Don Kowet, co-author of the *TV Guide* article, has written a book, *A Matter of Honor*, which purports to be "the full inside story of the CBS documentary and its repercussions." The book itself, however, adds a new twist to the story. The defendants in the Westmoreland suit wrote letters to Macmillan, the book's publisher, just prior to its release, threatening to sue Macmillan and Kowet. They allege that he is guilty of exactly the same kind of journalistic misconduct of which he has accused them.

Kowet's book does two things. First, it presents in greater detail than ever before the critique of the CBS broadcast. Second, Kowet attempts to reconstruct the making of the documentary, in a way that brings out all the foibles and the perfidy of CBS personnel, especially of George Crile, the man who conceived of and produced "The Un-

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counted Enemy." For this behind-the-scenes portrayal, Kowet apparently has relied largely on the recollections of an inside source, Ira Klein, the editor of the documentary, who had a bitter falling out with Crile.

In itself, the indictment of CBS is impressive. Not only did CBS fail to interview on camera key witnesses whom it anticipated would contradict its premise, and, in the case of Rostow, fail to include in the broadcast any part of an interview it did conduct; it also edited its interviews with Generals Westmoreland and Graham so as to omit the most telling points they had to make in their own defense. The most important of these was that, according to the final intelligence estimates of the size of the enemy force that took part in the Tet Offensive, Westmoreland's numbers for overall enemy strength had been too *high*, not too low, as the critics featured by CBS had argued.

In addition, CBS was guilty of various acts of cinematic sleight-of-hand that distorted the meaning of some of what its viewers saw. A man whom CBS introduced as "the head of MAC-V's delegation" to a crucial meeting of the National Intelligence Estimate Board was in fact a rather minor participant and not from MAC-V at all, but he was willing to endorse the documentary's premise. The general who did head MAC-V's delegation had apparently denied, in an unfilmed and untaped interview, the point CBS wanted to make. In another passage in the program it edited into a sequence about one meeting a response that Westmoreland had given to a question about another meeting; in the changed context Westmoreland appeared to be making a damning admission. And there was more in this vein.

Kowet's indictment is vitiated, however, by the manner and substance of his presentation of the inside story behind the documentary. His portraits of CBS personnel are vicious and lack verisimilitude. George Crile is presented as a stunningly disorganized neurotic who compels his secretary to work late just because he can't bear to be alone. She, in turn, is constantly on the brink of breakdown, trying to meet his endless unreasonable demands. Mike Wallace got his job with CBS News because its president, Dick Salant, was impressed when he heard that Wallace, in order to clean up his image, offered to buy out his own contract with Parliament for cigarette commercials. (I quit smoking years ago and have never made a cigarette commercial in my life. Are you listening, CBS?)

What makes the book's style a serious problem, and not merely a silly diversion, is that Kowet tells his story in narrative form, without offering essential information about the source of his knowledge. He relates incident after incident that occurred behind CBS's doors, all in impressive detail, and with dialogue in quotation marks. Presumably he is relying on his inside source or sources, but can they recall a year's worth of conversations verbatim?

KOWET acknowledges that many of his quotations are "reconstructions" aimed at capturing the gist of what was said, not the exact words. He argues that this is a legitimate journalistic device used previously by the likes of Truman Capote, David Halberstam, and Woodward and Bernstein. Whether or not this device is ever legitimate, the style of Kowet's presentation detracts from his indictment in important ways. Kowet's abuse of quotation marks casts a shadow of doubt over his own journalistic standards. Whatever others may have done, the simple truth is that putting quotation marks around something that is not a quotation may serve the cause of expediency or of drama, but it serves not at all the cause of precision, the hallmark of good journalism.

Kowet cites various documents—court depositions, for example, and the Benjamin report—to make critical points in his indictment. Still, in many cases when the reader sees a quotation he has no way of knowing whether it comes from a document or from a Kowet "reconstruction." For example, Kowet gives this quote from Mike Wallace, defending CBS's decision to use nothing from its Walt Rostow interview: "Rostow and L.B.J. were not our story," said Wallace. "Our story was that the 'books were cooked.' " The essence of CBS's story, as Wallace himself had gravely intoned, was that the "books" had been "cooked " precisely in order to fool Johnson. Rostow's testimony that Johnson knew all about the differing estimates tore the heart out of CBS's argument. Therefore, Wallace's excuse for eliminating Rostow from the broadcast was absurd and self-incriminating. But readers of Kowet's book could not know whether Wallace

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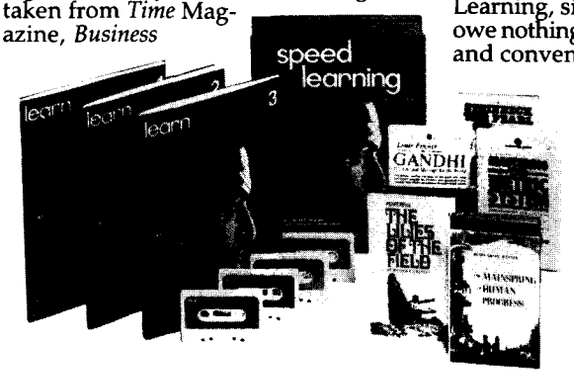

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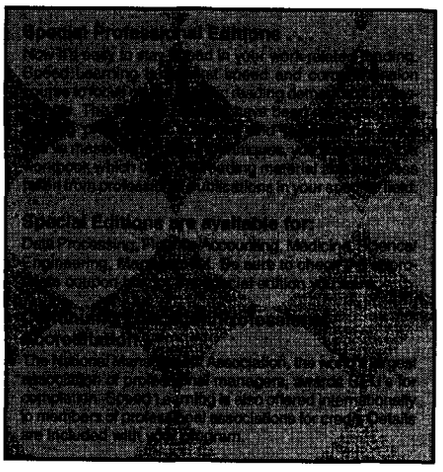

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actually said this or not, unless they also happen to have read the Benjamin report, which is where the quotation comes from.

Kowet's self-defeating approach to his material is all the more disappointing because important issues are at stake in the CBS-Westmoreland controversy, as Kowet himself recognizes. One is the question of why we lost the war in Vietnam. CBS and Westmoreland represent two opposing positions—one holding that our defeat flowed from the perfidy and incompetence of the U.S. military, the other holding that we in fact won the war on the battlefield only to lose it in the press rooms.

Both of these interpretations are caricatures of reality, as the Tet Offensive, the event around which CBS built its documentary, illustrates. It now seems widely agreed that for the Communists Tet was a military defeat but a political victory. That political victory stemmed in part from reports in the U.S. press, (including on CBS) that portrayed the offensive as more successful than it was. On the other hand, those portrayals hit home in part because the U.S. government, including military commanders, had juggled reports and figures to present the American public with an unwarrantedly optimistic picture of the situation in Vietnam. (Had CBS stuck to this accusation, it would have had a much more convincing case against Westmoreland et al, but a much less original or interesting one.) As the passage of time continues to draw some of the sting from the memory of our experience in Vietnam, the United States can only profit from a sober and conscientious re-examination of that war. What was wrong with the CBS documentary was that it was imbued with all the venom and the tendentiousness that characterized the debate about the Vietnam War at its height.

The other important issue in this controversy is that of media irresponsibility. The public reaction to the quarrel between the press and the U.S. government over the invasion of Grenada last year gave evidence of widespread disaffection with a press corps that has grown ever more aggressive in asserting its prerogatives as the watchdogs over everyone else, while displaying little interest in discovering or correcting its own misconduct. CBS's documentary and Kowet's book may both be taken as examples of the unhappy state to which standards of journalism have fallen.

The one person who emerges a genuine hero in this controversy is Burton Benjamin, a veteran journalist who gave evidence of no interest other than getting at the truth, and who may be seen to represent all those journalists who welcome being held to, and having their news organizations held to, the highest standards of their profession. CBS continues to try to walk away from the Benjamin report, but it remains the best account of what was wrong with "The Uncounted Enemy."

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

Joshua Muravchik is a Washington-based writer. He is currently completing a book, to be published by Madison Books, on the Carter Administration and United States human rights policy.

HOW GRAVITY BEGAN

Slow Learner: Early Stories by Thomas Pynchon

(Little, Brown, 208 pp., $14.95)

The apprentice work of a major novelist makes better reading than the mature productions of a dozen minor ones. Thomas Pynchon wrote four of the five stories in this book around the age of 21, the fifth at 27. For all their energy and invention, they would now be forgotten had he written nothing else. But he went on to write *V.* (1963), *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966), and *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), each in turn the most profound and accomplished American novel since the end of World War II. Readers who discovered Pynchon's stories in little magazines in the late 1950s would have seen in them an adroit young talent that might bear watching. Readers who discover them now will find an exhilarating spectacle of greatness discovering its powers.

To Pynchon himself the spectacle is embarrassing. Looking back from the vantage of his mid-40s, he sees only the slow learner of his title repeatedly committing faults he has still not fully outgrown. His introduction provides a relentlessly detailed catalogue of his youthful failings: "bad ear," "puerility," "adventitious lectures about tale-telling and geometry," "overwriting," "phony data," "stupid mistakes," "literary theft," "fancy footwork," "dumb theories," and more. The best he can say of his stories is that they might be useful as examples of bad writing, "illustrative of typical problems in entry-level fiction, and cautionary about some practices which younger writers might prefer to avoid." Pynchon's indictment of his younger self is accurate, but it is one-sided. It ignores the fact that the faults of his stories proved to be virtues in embryo. He blundered; but he was exploring unknown territory. He stumbled; but he was learning virtuoso turns.

In his novels, however, he rarely made a false step. He achieved an inclusive vision of character and culture unparalleled in recent American writing. He integrated disparate realms of knowledge—social, psychological, linguistic, historical, scientific—without falsifying any one of them by making one the master-science that determines all the others. He understood that society and the psyche are intimately connected, but that the order of one could not be reduced to the order of the other. Neither Freud nor Marx gets the last word in Pynchon; neither, in fact, gets much to say at all. Pynchon's characters are shaped by the social world in the ways that everyone is shaped—by the patterns of the city, by the cycles of commerce, by the assumptions of the printed word—but which modern literature had largely forgotten until he began writing. Joyce and Mann look, by comparison, like innocents in a playground of poetic myths. To cite one example only, Pynchon takes seriously the ways in which his characters earn a living. Most characters in modern fiction hold down a job either as a sop to verisimilitude or as a source of glamour

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or pathos. Pynchon's characters think and act, like everyone, in terms derived partly from the work they spend much of their time performing. In *Gravity's Rainbow* the statistician Roger Mexico has mathematical probability ingrained in his thinking. It shapes his politics and his loves—yet he never collapses into an allegorical type signifying Mathematics.

Pynchon constructs his characters by giving equal weight to elements taken from public history (work, politics, ideas) and from personal history (sex, family, disease). His ability to make these elements cohere has burdened him, ironically enough, with a false reputation as a purveyor of grotesques. This says more about the unexamined assumptions held by critics than it does about Pynchon. A character like Brigadier Pudding, the coprophiliac fetishist of *Gravity's Rainbow*, will certainly seem grotesque to readers who assume personality is the product of interior processes that are essentially the same at all times and in all places. But the Brigadier is a logical product of his memories of the carnage at Ypres, his futile historical theories, and his combination of bureaucratic power and bureaucratic helplessness. There are no grotesques in Pynchon's novels for the simple reason that Pynchon acknowledges no standard (other than an ethical one) by which a character might be judged eccentric or extreme. He values the incorrigible uniqueness of his characters—and only directs his moral anger at them when they fail to do likewise.

HE EXTENDS the same generosity to his fellow writers. In his introduction to *Slow Learner*, as much a cultural portrait of the late 1950s as an account of his own stories, he praises just about everyone who has written fiction in the past quarter-century. From Bellow and Kerouac to Barthelme and Le Carré, every writer he names is someone who either expanded possibilities for style, or enlarged the range of fictional subject matter, or took a trivial genre and made it serious. Apparently the only writer of the time who got everything wrong was the young Thomas Pynchon. Only where Pynchon was especially entranced back then by some aspect of the period's culture does he find something to criticize now. There are surprises here for his readers. Having written novels that too often read like propaganda in a war between the virtuous young and the wicked old, he now keeps returning to what he calls "the puerility angle." He notes that the Beat movement and the hippie resurgence, which he honored, though ambiguously, in his novels, "placed too much emphasis on youth, including the eternal variety." Not that his essential loyalties have changed. He is quick to remember that the movement, "after all, was a sane and decent affirmation of what we all want to believe about American values." What bothers him now is the way the movement fed his own adolescent values and helped them play havoc with his writing.

YET HIS stories resist adolescent values more often than they yield. The first, "The Small Rain," takes one of Pynchon's favorite character types, a passive young man who lets an institution (here the peacetime army) do his thinking for him, and brings him to a voluntary confrontation with death. When the young man's unit is called in to provide communications for troops cleaning up after a hurricane, he slips into the crew of a tugboat gathering corpses left by the storm. Pynchon now sees this story as "defective" in the evasive way its narrator and characters deal with the subject of death ("When we speak of 'seriousness' in fiction ultimately we are talking about an attitude toward death"), but in judging it he has the moral exigencies of *The Crying of Lot 49* and *Gravity's Rainbow* for comparison. Pynchon also complains that he made someone's Southern accent crucial to the plot without taking the trouble to get the accent right. What he does not mention is that this botched effort led directly to the grand and exact polyphonies of *Gravity's Rainbow*.

Where Pynchon finds evasiveness in "The Small Rain," he finds deliberate regression in "Low-lands." The main character of this story retreats from marriage into what may or may not be a fantasy relation with a three-and-a-half-foot-tall gypsy woman whose face and diction are like a child's. Earlier he had retreated from his honeymoon into a two-week drunk with his sailor buddies. Pynchon observes that this character is obviously a small boy inside, "although when I wrote this story I thought he was pretty cool." By focusing on the foreground defects of the story, Pynchon ignores some remarkable doings in back. The setting shifts from a house that hides a secret network of tunnels built by a smuggler during Prohibition to a junkyard laced by a network of tunnels built by forgotten terrorists during the Depression—and now populated by gypsies who may or may not be imaginary. The hidden networks of this story, and its passage from social dissent to private fantasy, served as preliminary sketches for all three of Pynchon's novels. There, hidden networks would come to signify social patterns as dense and complex as those in Balzac or Dickens, and the tempting passage from dissent to fantasy would end in fatal consequences.

Pynchon decries another aspect of this story with greater justice. He points to "an unacceptable level of racist, sexist and proto-Fascist talk," not only in the voice of one of the characters, but in his own narrative voice at the time. The time provided plenty of bad examples: "John Kennedy's role model James Bond was about to make his name by kicking Third World people around." Still, the narrative voice in "Low-lands," he concludes, "remains that of a smart-assed jerk who didn't know any better, and I apologize for it."

When he turns to his next story Pynchon shows himself a better critic than his critics. "Disagreeable as I find 'Low-lands' now, it's nothing compared to my bleakness of heart when I have to look at 'Entropy.' " This is his most discussed and most anthologized story,

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largely because it includes straightforward expository versions of scientific issues later elaborated in his novels. While a lease-breaking party degenerates toward chaos in the apartment downstairs, middle-aged Callisto, in a closed bedroom one floor up, meditates on thermodynamics. Using the style Henry Adams used when meditating on power, Callisto does little more than meditate, on Pynchon's behalf. He speculates, for example, that cultures are subject to entropic decline just as thermodynamic systems are. Meanwhile, the temperature outside remains ominously constant, and the world settles into terminal stasis. Pynchon recalls in his introduction his "somber glee at any idea of mass destruction or decline"—a pose "fairly common, I hope, among pre-adults." The story is not without flashes of inspiration, or at least inspired silliness. In one of Pynchon's early forays into the realm of secret sympathies, he invents a jazz quartet that *thinks* the music, without instruments. After getting mixed up when one member thinks the wrong tune and another the wrong key, they start again as the leader comments, "Back to the airless void." The story, unfortunately, keeps returning to a schematic void of its own. As Pynchon observes in his introduction, "It is simply wrong to begin with a theme, symbol or other abstract unifying agent, and then try to force characters and events to conform to it."

Pynchon begins to redeem his early promise in the fourth story, "Under the Rose." This is a tale of international espionage set in Alexandria and Cairo in 1898. Pynchon broke through a six-month writer's block by looting everything but the plot from Baedeker's 1898 guide to Egypt. For the plot, John Buchan and his ilk provided material he could "steal, or let us say 'derive.' " Pynchon had made some self-mocking gestures toward writing historical fiction in "Entropy," where, writing in 1958 or 1959, he offers picturesque details of Washington, D.C., "back then" in 1957. In "Under the Rose" he set himself the task of reconstructing a time and place he had never seen—and he also wrote the first of his stories whose characters seem to include no one remotely like himself. Also for the first time, he integrated his theoretical interests into the lives of his characters. A British spy, his sense of self based on a myth of personal heroism as the moving force in history, is forced to learn that history might be moved by larger, impersonal forces. Statistics may matter more than character. In effect, the revelation kills him. Pynchon records his debt to *The Prince* and *To the Finland Station* here, debts additional to those he owes Baedeker and Buchan. But what he now calls "literary theft" was his means of looking outside his own experience, of learning how to "shut up and listen"—something he says he began learning only later. In fact, he was able to build the vast historical panorama of *V.* around the kernel provided by "Under the Rose"; the story, much rewritten, became one of the novel's chapters. Pynchon was 22 when he wrote the story. Three years later—slow learner—he had finished *V.*

TWO YEARS afterward came "The Secret Integration." Although he works hard to list the defects of this story, even Pynchon finally has to admit it has virtues as well. Whether he is ready to accept responsibility for them is another matter: "Sometime in the last couple of decades, some company of elves must have snuck in and had a crack at it." The story follows a group of small-town children as they try to organize a Spartacist revolt of practical jokes against school and parents, partly in response to their parents' harassment of a black family that recently moved in. (Pynchon is responding, five years later, to his attitudes in "Low-lands.") One of the children in the group, the child of the black family, turns out in the end to have been an imaginary playmate, a fantasy abandoned when the group is forced to recognize both the ugliness of their parents' hatred and their own need for the safety their parents provide.

Pynchon achieved the moral and psychological complexity of this story through a means he now finds suspect—"the old Baedeker trick" of transferring his experience to a place he never knew, in this case a Berkshire town he read about in a W.P.A. guide. Discussing this "strategy of transfer," Pynchon seems almost ready to abandon the anonymity, the refusal of autobiography, that made possible the massive scale and sympathy of his novels, but which had also brought him notoriety as the invisible man of American letters. "Somewhere," he writes, "I had come up with the notion that one's personal life had nothing to do with fiction, when the truth, as everyone knows, is

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nearly the direct opposite." Yet the very next sentence shows that Pynchon is not throwing in his lot with writers who keep telling their own histories in ever more bloated forms. "The fiction," he continues, "that moved and pleased me then as now was precisely that which had been made luminous, undeniably authentic by having been found and taken up, always at a cost, from deeper, more shared levels of the life we all really live." It is the shared life that matters, not the life special to an author. This promises much for Pynchon's next novel, but it is also somewhat unfair to his previous ones. The complex particulars that he has always valued in his characters are signs of the uniqueness that—on a deep and shared level of the life we all really live—is everyone's birthright.

Pynchon does more to honor that birthright than any other living writer. By refusing to make himself the center of his fiction, he has earned without seeking it an authority beyond the reach of writers who follow the traditional American way of self-assertion. Pynchon's way was different from the start, and from the start he knew why it ought to be. When he wrote "Lowlands" he already knew enough to say this about an offstage character: "There are many ways of telling a sea-story, but perhaps because of the music and because the words had nothing to with personal legend, Delgado's way seemed tinged with truth of a special order."

EDWARD MENDELSON

Edward Mendelson is professor of English at Columbia University and editor of *Pynchon: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Prentice Hall).

THE DEVELOPMENT DILEMMA

Reality and Rhetoric
by P. T. Bauer

(Harvard University Press, 192 pp., $15)

Most people of liberal and generous sympathies would agree that apart from the prevention of nuclear holocaust there is probably nothing more important for human welfare than the economic development of the less developed parts of the world. Most of the human race lives in these areas, and almost all in abject poverty. One of the finer features of postwar liberalism in the United States, and of comparable political tendencies in other developed democracies, has been a humane concern for the welfare and the dignity of the peoples of the Third World. In the years just after World War II, there were still many people (especially on the right) who took it for granted that the colonial and impoverished status of less developed areas was only a natural reflection of the racial or cultural inferiority of non-Caucasian peoples. It is a tribute to American liberalism that it was among the first political persuasions to rise above the desire to lord it over the poor and the powerless peoples.

Unfortunately, it is now clear from many facts and studies, including P. T. Bauer's new book, that much of the best intentioned thinking about what is needed for the economic advance of the poor people in the less developed areas has been utterly and tragically wrong. Indeed, there is probably nothing that weighs so heavily now upon these poor people as the erroneous ideas that sprang, in part, from the same humane circles that first expressed concern about the need for their economic growth.

One of these ideas was that, whatever economic policies might be best for the advanced economies, the newly independent nations needed a good deal more planning and central control of their economies. As Bauer emphasizes in *Reality and Rhetoric*, this idea overlooked the history of the industrialized nations, all of which had developed without such central control and planning. (This is true, by the way, even of Russia, which grew rapidly between 1895 and World War I, and had in 1913 very nearly the same level of per capita income in relation to the United States that the Soviet Union has today.) We know now that this idea also has not been supported by the postwar experience of the less developed regions. The most rapidly growing of these areas, such as Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore, have not relied upon centralized planning, while many of the less successful, such as mainland China, India, and (above all) Tanzania, did.

Bauer also points out that governments in developing areas that ambitiously tried to control their economies from the center were often not able to provide law and order throughout their domains. In my judgment, this is largely a reflection of the exceptional weakness of all undeveloped countries in large-scale organization, and most especially public administration. The bazaars and market squares of even the more primitive countries are filled with astute bargainers and traders; in sub-Saharan Africa, there were successful traders, even in slaves, before European colonization. At the same time, in essentially all of the less developed world, public bureaucracies are not only abysmally inefficient, but also nepotistic and corrupt. The hospital patient in the most ignominous of emergencies may even need to bribe the nurse to get a bedpan. This special weakness in large-scale organization and public administration appears to be inherent in poor societies; it characterized Europe in pre-industrial times no less than the developing areas today.

The "organization man" or the effective bureaucrat sometimes seen now in advanced countries seems to be largely the result of considerable experience with large-scale industry, of high levels of education, and of advanced systems of transportation and communication that make it possible to monitor and integrate far-flung organizations to some degree. It now seems likely that the optimal role for government in economic life, in direct contrast to the conventional wisdom of a few years ago, is *smaller* in the developing nations than in those that are already industrialized.

Another now-discredited idea that flourished in the first period of concern for the Third World was that uncon-

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trolled trade with industrialized countries, and openness to foreign investment and enterprises were generally harmful to economic development. Free trade with industrialized countries was supposed to stifle the growth of domestic manufacturers, which were deemed indispensable to development; and foreign investment or intrusion by multinational firms was regarded as a form of exploitation. Bauer argues that it should have been evident all along that the experience of the already industrialized nations was not consistent with this idea, and in this he is largely correct. From the British Industrial Revolution onward, it was usually those countries with the most trade with Britain or other advanced nations, or which became part of trade-promoting customs unions such as the German *Zollverein*, that advanced the most rapidly. The case of Japan after the Meiji restoration of 1867-68 is particularly notable, for about this time the Japanese were denied, in the "humiliating treaties" with Western powers, the right to have tariffs (except for revenue only up to 5 percent), and the Meiji restoration abolished the previously ubiquitous trade restrictions of the nearly three hundred feudal domains in Japan. Yet by the early-twentieth century Japan had already developed sufficiently to win a war with Russia.

Foreign investment and firms set up by foreigners also played an important role in the development of many of the already advanced countries; British investment played a most constructive role in the nineteenth-century American economic growth, for example, and firms set up by British entrepreneurs played a conspicuous role in Belgium, the first country on the Continent to industrialize. A similar pattern is evident in the less developed areas of recent times as well. There is a striking association between the extent to which developing economies have been open to foreign competition and given a high priority to exports, and their rates of economic and industrial growth. Hong Kong, denied tariff protection by its British colonial masters, and exceptionally successful in developing manufacturing despite the absence of natural resources and a precarious environment, offers a notable example. Bauer similarly points to interesting cases where openness to foreign trade in a poor economy has led to the expansion of the sphere of a money economy; and then in turn to the emergence of successful traders, including some who establish efficient factories that process agricultural products or produce substitutes for imports, and thus start a nation on the path of industrial as well as agricultural development. He also points out that the areas of the world which have had the least interaction with the West, such as Nepal and Ethiopia, are among the poorest.

Bauer does not, at least in this book, properly consider the inegalitarian and poverty-increasing effects of protectionism and of the exclusion of multinational firms in developing areas. Perhaps this is partly because of his obvious distaste for egalitarian rhetoric and his occasionally somewhat doctrinaire conservatism. (He was elevated to the House of Lords by Mrs. Thatcher.) In any event, in most developing countries, capital and technical skill are relatively scarce and thus relatively expensive, especially in comparison with unskilled labor and natural and agricultural resources. Thus restrictions on imports of manufactures, which require relatively large amounts of capital and technical skill, raise the prices of capital and technical skills in a developing society, and these resources are owned mainly by the more prosperous and elite groups. Since the exports and imports of a country must be in some kind of balance over the longer run, the restriction on imports also tends to reduce the demand for the developing country's exports, which are mainly produced by its ill-paid labor and natural resources. This reduces, in turn, the incomes of those who export, such as the peasantry.

In Africa, moreover, most farmers are further exploited by government marketing boards with a legal monopoly of trade in each country's agricultural exports. The marketing boards give the farmers only a fraction of the amount for which the exports are sold on the world market, and the government spends the difference on the well-placed elites in the civil and military bureaucracies and on those who bribe them. These interests are almost all in the capital city; excessive urbanization normally occurs. Such policies grow mainly out of the disproportionate political influence of the urban elites and business interests in most developing countries. This is partly due to the poor transportation and communication in the rural areas, which (in combination with episodic repression) keeps the mass of the people—the peasantry—from organizing to countervail the collusion of established and relatively prosperous urban interests. The result, evident most strikingly in many Latin American countries, is exceptional extremes of wealth and poverty, along with bloated capital cities.

Though Bauer's work sometimes does not do justice to the inequalities in developing societies, and is sometimes one-sided and insistent, it should be widely read. He has observed the less developed areas carefully over many years, and most of his policy conclusions are bolstered by a vast array of pertinent facts. His writings, in addition, are a valuable antidote to a number of ideas that, though inspired by noble intentions, are poisoning the prospects of many of the world's poorest people.

MANCUR OLSON

Mancur Olson, professor of economics at the University of Maryland, is the author of *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (Yale University Press).

10/28/29 LOQUITUR

The day of my birth glares at me
From out of the black-framed front page
Of a newspaper of that date.
Standing on the floor, tilted up
Against low bookshelves and blocking
Easy access to what volumes
Are there behind it, tilted up
In the poor light across the room,
The staring glass reflects a low
Ceiling and casts the page, headlines
And all, into a grayish blank,
Save for "*The New York Times*" in that
Old, still assuring (but of what?)
Black letter. What has it to say
For itself, late in the lost day?

—"Don't look at me like that, for I
Promised you only that you'd die."

JOHN HOLLANDER

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BRIEF REVIEW

A Very Private Eye: An Autobiography in Diaries and Letters by Barbara Pym edited by Hazel Holt and Hilary Pym

(Dutton, 334 pp., $18.95)

Barbara Pym's admirers have often compared her novels to those of Jane Austen, and the two writers do share an ironic view of the vagaries of human behavior and a deliberately domestic frame of reference that give their books a deceptively light tone. What Pym's work, taken as a whole, doesn't have is Austen's merciless grasp of the economic and social realities that shape her characters' lives. Nor does she have her subversive ability to insinuate those realities into books masquerading as comedies. Most of Pym's novels (there are significant exceptions) *are* comedies: funny, clever, even insightful, but lacking in depth.

What a surprise, then, to discover that Pym herself was a vibrant, passionate woman who felt things very deeply and expressed her emotions openly in the diaries and letters that make up *A Very Private Eye*. Reading her early entries, largely concerned with unhappy love affairs ("It is sometimes intolerable to be a woman," she cries at one point), one is reminded far more of Charlotte Brontë than of Jane Austen. The story of Pym's later years, when after writing six moderately popular and well-reviewed novels she was unable to get another published for fourteen years, is the material of tragedy rather than comedy. Her diaries from this period are painful to read, with their palpable sense of hurt and rejection.

Naturally, the humor and keen observation of detail so familiar from her novels are also present in Pym's autobiography, and she eloquently defends her right to that style of expression. "What is wrong with being obsessed with trivia?" she asks, reacting to editors' criticism of *The Sweet Dove Died*, still unpublished in 1970. "What are the minds of my critics filled with? What *nobler* and more worthwhile things?" The pain and bitterness of her response are all the more poignant because *The Sweet Dove Died* is, with the brooding *Quartet in Autumn*, Pym's darkest, strongest work; to find it "obsessed with trivia" is to have missed the point completely.

In 1977 Pym was named one of the most underrated writers of the century in the *Times Literary Supplement*. Suddenly, after fourteen years, she was publishable; *Quartet in Autumn* came out in 1977, and *The Sweet Dove Died* was released in 1978. The final irony in a life filled with bitter humor was that by the time this long overdue redress came her way she had less than three years to live. Her final diary entries are deeply moving: sustained by her strong religious faith, she is matter-of-fact and completely without self-pity in describing the inexorable physical decline caused by her cancer. She hoped only to be able to finish her last novel, *A Few Green Leaves*; shortly after the final draft was completed, she was dead.

A Very Private Eye chronicles two major periods in Pym's life in absorbing detail: 1932-1946, when she attended Oxford, wrote her first novel, and served in the Women's Royal Naval Service; and 1963-1980, spanning the unhappy era when she couldn't get published and her ultimate vindication. The book's principal flaw is its skimpy coverage (a scant twenty-eight pages) of the intervening seventeen years when Pym was a working novelist, which makes the narrative rather discontinuous. The editors explain that during those years Pym used her diaries principally as source material for the novels. Since she is hardly the most autobiographical of writers, it's clear that a wealth of personal detail has been lost forever, which is a shame. The outspoken, generous young woman of the early diaries and the emotionally cautious, self-styled spinster of the later ones are both fascinating people. If the intervening diaries had survived, we could have seen how Barbara Pym evolved from one character into the other.

WENDY SMITH

Wendy Smith is a freelance writer who has contributed book reviews to *The New York Times*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and many other publications.

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CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

teaching certificates. If too many incompetent teachers have been hired, what does this say about those administrators who, having used ridiculously low standards and inadequate tests, hired them in the first place?

Mr. Owen to the contrary, Gregory Anrig, president of Educational Testing Service, was absolutely correct when he said, "It is morally and educationally wrong to tell someone who has been judged a satisfactory teacher for many years that passing a certain test on a certain day is necessary to keep his or her job." Didn't TNR have a test for Mr. Owen?

IRVING SOSLOW
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

BAG LADY

To the editors:

About plastic grocery bags ("Washington Diarist," TNR, June 25). They are held at arm's length by the handles. This is convenient for men, as it is the way men carry things. Paper bags are held with both arms, resting on your hip or against your waist. Either way, you have two arms and a small ledge to support the weight of the bags. This is the way women carry things. Men have designed plastic grocery bags for their own comfort and convenience. Fine, but leave us to our paper bags. Also, pack a bag (plastic) neatly, heavy things on the bottom, strawberries on top. Put several of these bags in your trunk. When you get home the bags are all topsy-turvy, having slouched and dropped and "found the lowest level," like water. Now, because they are too heavy to hold by the handles, carry them in both arms, one at a time, up to your three-story walk-up. Then search for the strawberries. Thanks, I'll stick to paper bags.

BARBARA LIND
Chicago, Illinois

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850 by Sean Wilentz (Oxford University Press). A pioneering study in the history of the American proletariat. (Reviewed 7/9/84)

Loyalties by Daniel Patrick Moynihan (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich). Reflections on nuclear weapons and other dangers from America's foremost intellectual in politics. (7/9/84)

Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative by Peter Brooks (Knopf). An unfashionable argument about the meaning of order in fiction. (7/9/84)

Infante's Inferno by G. Cabrera Infante (Harper & Row). Outrageous memories of a Havana boyhood. (7/9/84)

Motives for Fiction by Robert Alter (Harvard University Press). Occasional critical writings that transcend their occasion. (7/9/84)

Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960 by Ronald H. Spector (Center of Military History, U.S. Army). The accomplished first volume in a history of the Army's tortuous experience in Vietnam. (7/2/84)

Dawn to the West by Donald Keene (Holt, Rinehart, & Winston). 2,000 pages exhaustively, informatively, covering the modern literature of Japan. (6/25/84).

An American Procession by Alfred Kazin (Knopf). The brilliant culmination of a critic's lifelong look at American literature. (6/18/84)

The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion by Leo Steinberg (Pantheon/October Book). An original study of a delicate subject. (6/11/84)

Children in Exile: Poems 1968-1984 by James Fenton (Random House). A British poet's evocations of Germany, Cambodia, and other nightmares. (5/14/84)

TRB, *from page 4*

prove that every aspect of its hiring and promotion policy is essential to the job. This is hard to do, and well nigh impossible when subjective factors such as interviews are involved.

Once there has been a "finding" of discrimination, courts may impose quotas, not as part of the Civil Rights Act itself, but as a "remedy." The courts have broad powers to enforce remedies. The notion is that a proven wrongdoer has lost his right to complain. In the case of quotas, however, the price of the remedy falls, not on the alleged wrongdoer, the employer, but on innocent third parties.

Finally, an employer staring into this legal abyss may recoil and impose quotas without even being sued. The Supreme Court has held that if an employer institutes racial quotas "voluntarily"—ho ho—the specific prohibitions against using the Civil Rights Act for reverse discrimination don't come into play (although it took a lot of fancy footwork to explain why the general prohibition against discrimination shouldn't apply).

The *Stotts* opinion, written by Justice White, seems to reject this legal fandango. The policy of the Civil Rights Act, he says, "is to provide make-whole relief only to those who have been actual victims of illegal discrimination." Courts have no authority "to give preferential treatment to non-victims," meaning people who haven't proved that they have been personally discriminated against. Although White also emphasizes the Civil Rights Act's specific protection of seniority, that phrase in the act actually refers to a "bona fide seniority *or merit* system."

Obviously if affirmative action is to be limited to proven victims of specific acts of discrimination, it has ceased to exist as a social policy. The logic of veterans' preference is that veterans have sacrificed to serve their country and suffer a competitive disadvantage on the job market as a result. This is only a generalization, yet no veteran is required to prove that his experience fits this pattern in order to benefit from the official preference. The logic of affirmative action is, or was, that blacks have suffered discrimination and are at a competitive disadvantage as a result. Why do people find the idea of acting directly from this generalization so much more alarming?

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JERUSALEM DIARIST

Festival

"WHO'S THAT GUY with Peretz?" I wish I could say that this was what I heard whispered all over Israel this week, but it wasn't quite that way. They like movies in Israel, and I was there mostly to accompany none other than Warren Beatty on his first visit. We've known each other since the 1968 McCarthy campaign, but this was my first opportunity to witness him in full procession. Because he is a movie star he was an object of identification wherever we went and, because he is Warren Beatty, of desire as well. "I am Miss Israel of 1979," insisted one perky, persistent hanger-on, boldly projecting those of her assets likely to have persuaded the contest's judges. "You were marvelous in *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone*," exclaimed another young woman with a long memory. (What, she didn't like *Heaven Can Wait*?) Of course, there were also plenty of earnest, serious questions about movies, even about "film." Either way, to the non-movie star suddenly face-to-face with someone from the celluloid world of faraway dreams the moment is special—as it can't be to the one who has heard and answered all the questions and compliments ten thousand times, and whose own complicated reality is very different from the movie dream. Yet Beatty seemed respectful, even delicate, witn those who wouldn't allow him to be just another visitor. He would make a superior politician. We talked some about politics and especially about our respective regrets over the Hart campaign, but mostly we talked about Israel and the Middle East. I won't purport to give his impressions, except to say that morally and intellectually serious people—and he is one—don't fall for the kinds of simplifications that have been fashionable in recent years. But then a trip to Israel always undercuts the simplifications.

THE OCCASION was the Jerusalem Film Festival, part of a larger month-long festival of the arts, with nearly two hundred performances by perhaps fifty musical, theatrical, and dance groups from around the world, an organic extension of the rich cultural activity in modern Jerusalem. This aspect of the Holy City would be notable even if it weren't in sharp contrast to the inflamed regional political context in which it exists. Here is a city of 420,000 people. Two-thirds of them are Arabs and Jews from the Levant; neither group has historically had much to do with high culture. Of the remaining Jews of European origin—40 percent of the Jewish population—perhaps 20 percent are of the ultra-orthodox persuasions, dogmatic and cut off from the modern, even the pre-modern, sensibility. Yet almost everything of artistic quality is sold out. Where do the audiences come from? There is a hard core of Western and Westernized Jews whose parents and grandparents went to concerts in Vienna and Warsaw and St. Petersburg, cousins of the people who fill Lincoln Center. But these people are only a bare fraction of those who fill the theaters, who go to the museums at a rate higher than anywhere else in the world, and who circulate books in ever-increasing numbers from the municipal library system. The rest are the children of people to whom drama and chamber music, ballet and sculpture, and even jazz were alien experiences, possessions of distant elites. This is no longer the case, thanks in large part to Mayor Teddy Kollek's aggressive cultural policy. Official support for high culture as a value in itself may seem patronizing, but the city hardly disdains its ethnographic strains. Indeed, backing for the folk arts creates the self-confidence that opens people up to the elite arts. Yes, there is some residual antagonism from populist anti-intellectuals and xenophobes to the cultural program which brings art and music to children and children to art and music. We have art, said Nietzsche, so that we do not perish from the truth. In Jerusalem the arts increasingly are a common ground and a common language—if not a strategy for peace, then at least a strategy for tolerance among Jews and between Jews and Arabs.

UNESCO IS NOT in the habit of saying nice things about Israel, but while we were there this U.N. agency reported that there are more books per capita published, bought, and read in the Jewish state than anywhere else in the world. Literacy and the tradition of literacy are contagious. The fear of the European, or Ashkenazi, elites that the country will soon be Levantinized seems to be unfounded. Anyhow, I don't see it. Book fairs are vastly popular events, so popular that the numbers must depend on Levantines. So what will Levantine mean in the end? It certainly won't be a term of disdain.The British and American publishers I know who go to Jerusalem's semi-annual international book fair tell me that no public is so hungry for books as the Israeli—not even the literate publics of Communist Eastern Europe, which are forced to subsist on whatever the censorship permits. The UNESCO statistics were made vivid to us by Hebrew Book Week, which was being marked in Jerusalem in an open-air book bazaar that drew many thousands, young and old, all day and late into the night. The habit of reading is found among Jews and Arabs alike. When Jerusalem was reunified in 1967, the municipal authorities found a library system in the Arab sector which had six hundred men enrolled. Now, seventeen years later, more than eighteen thousand Arab men and women circulate an average of twelve books per person per year. This, too, is a result of an aggressive cultural policy. The world could do with more of this kind of aggressiveness.

ON THE LONG FLIGHT home to Boston I read Joan Peters's *From Time Immemorial*, a history of the conflict between Jew and Arab over Palestine. It was favorably reviewed in these pages (see "Demography And Destiny," by Ronald Sanders, April 23) and in the *Atlantic* by Walter Reich. In the daily *New York Times* Bernard Gwertzman attested to the power of the book's evidence but caviled at its tone, and in the *Times Book Review*, John C. Campbell, inveterate lance bearer for the received Arab view of history, huffed and puffed without quite charging, because he couldn't, that the facts were wrong. They aren't. Yes, Ms. Peters sometimes seems angry in her pages. Why shouldn't she be when so many historians and journalists, predisposed in their conclusions, have systematically ignored methodologically basic evidence available to anyone willing to put out the effort to find it? Important history is often angry. This book, if read, will change the mind of our generation. If understood, it could also affect the history of the future.

M.P.

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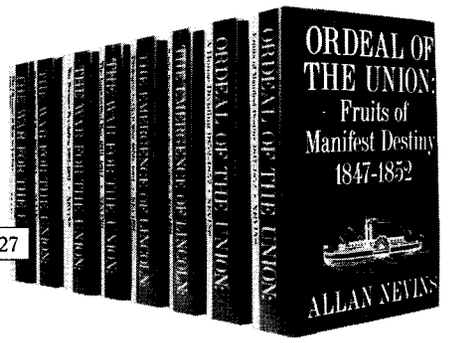

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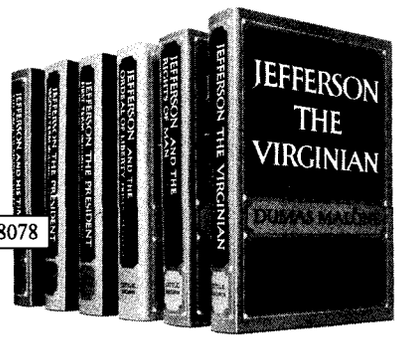

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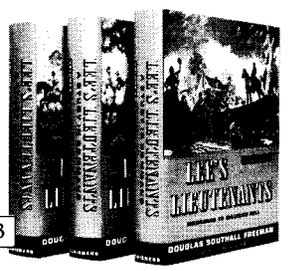

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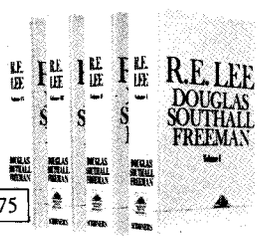

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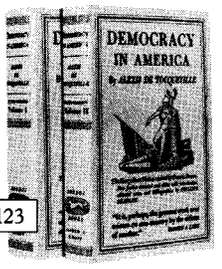

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